The Shrine of Dodona in the Archaic and Classical Ages. A History

Travelling to oracular sanctuaries was one of the main motivations for long-distance movements in antiquity. Located on the fringes of the Greek world, the oracular sanctuary of Zeus at Dodona attracted visitors from the Early Iron Age, but only from the mid-7th century BC onwards did its catchment area expand far beyond the Pindos mountain range. This book covers the history of the shrine from its emergence as a cult place up to the acquisition of a pan-Hellenic reputation, taking into account the communities and private individuals who dedicated, consulted, and performed rituals there.

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Cover Illustration:
Ram-horned Zeus Ammon from a bronze *situla*, probably from Dodona (Louvre Br 4235)

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Abbreviations

AAA	Athens Annual of Archaeology.
ABSA	The Annual of the British School at Athens.
AE	Archaiologike Ephemeris.
AIIN	Annali dell'Istituto Italiano di Numismatica.
AION(archeol)	Annali di archeologia e storia antica.
AJA	American Journal of Archaeology.
AJPh	American Journal of Philology.
ALGRM	W.H. Roscher (hrsg.), *Ausführliches Lexicon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, Leipzig 1886-1937.
ASAA	Annuario della Scuola Archeologica di Atene e delle Missioni Italiane in Oriente.
ASNP	Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Classe di Lettere e Filosofia.
BASP	The Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists.
BCH	Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique.
BE	*Bulletin Epigraphique*.
BIBR	Bulletin de l'Institut historique belge de Rome.
BICS	Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies.
BNJ	*Brill's New Jacoby*.
CAH	*The Cambridge Ancient History*.
CEG	P.A. Hansen, *Carmina epigraphica graeca saeculorum VIII-V a. Chr. n.*, Berlin 1983-1989.
ClAnt	Classical Antiquity.
CJ	The Classical Journal.
CPh	Classical Philology.
CQ	Classical Quartely.

CR	Classical Revue.
DVC	S. I Dakaris, J. Vokotopoulou, A. Ph. Christidis, *Τα μολύβδινα χρηστήρια πινάκια της Δωδώνης των ανασκαφών Δημητρίου Ευαγγελίδη*, Athina 2013.
EpeirChron	*Epeirotika Chronika*.
FGrHist	F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker*, Berlin 1923-1958.
FGH	K. Müller, *Fragmenta historicorum Graecorum*, Paris 1841-1884.
GIF	Giornale italiano di filologia.
GRBS	Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies.
HSCP	Harvard Studies in Classical Philology.
IApollonia	P. Cabanes, N. Ceka (éds.), *Corpus des inscriptions grecques d'Illyrie méridionale et d'Épire 1. Inscriptions d'Épidamne-Dyrrhachion et d'Apollonia.* Vol. 2. *Inscriptions d'Apollonia d'Illyrie*, Études épigraphiques, 2. Athens 1997.
IBouthrotos	P. Cabanes, F. Drini (éds.), *Corpus des inscriptions grecques d'Illyrie méridionale et d'Épire 2.2. Inscriptions de Bouthrôtos*. Études épigraphiques, 2. Athens 2007.
IDélos	F. Dürrbach *et al.*, *Inscriptions de Délos*, Paris 1926.
IEpidamnos	P. Cabanes, F. Drini (éds.), *Corpus des inscriptions grecques d'Illyrie méridionale et d'Épire 1. Inscriptions d'Épidamne-Dyrrhachion et d'Apollonia.* Vol. 1. *Inscriptions d'Épidamne-Dyrrhachion*, Études épigraphiques, 2. Athens 1995.
IG	*Inscriptiones graecae*.
Inventory	M.H. Hansen, T.H. Nielsen (eds.), *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis*, Oxford 2004.
IvO	W. Ditteberger, K. Purgold, *Die Inschriften von Olympia*, Berlin 1896.
JGA	Journal of Greek Archaeology.
JhBerlMus	Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen.
JHS	Journal of Hellenic Studies.
LIMC	*Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologie Classicae*, Zurich 1981-1999.

LGPN	*Lexicon Greek Personal Names.*
LSAG^2	L.H. Jeffery, *The Local Scripts of Archaic Greece. A Study of the Origin of the Greek Alphabet and Its Development from the Eighth to the Fifth Centuries B.C.*, Oxford 1990^2.
MedA	Mediterranean Archaeology.
MEFRA	Mélange de l'École française de Rome.
MN	Museum Helveticum.
OMI	*Odegos Museion Ioanninon.*
PAE	*Praktika Archailogikes Etaires* (Proceedings of the Archaeological Society).
PdP	La Parola del Passato.
QUCC	Quaderni urbinati di cultura classica.
RBPh	Revue belge de philologique d'histoire.
RE	A.Pauly, G.Wissowa, W.Kroll, K.Witte, K.Mittelhaus, K. Ziegler (hrsg.), *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Stuttgart 1894-1980.
REG	Revue des études grecques.
RFIC	Rivista di filologia e istruzione classica.
SEG	*Supplementum epigraphicum graecum.*
SemRom	Seminari romani di cultura greca.
SIFC	Studi italiani di filologia classica.
Syll.^{3}	W. Dittenberger, *Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum*, Leipzig 1915-1924.
TAPhA	Transactions of the American Philological Association.
ZPE	Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik.

Preface

The list of people to thank might well turn out to be longer than that of the known devotees of Dodona. This book originates from my D.Phil. thesis, defended at the University of Oxford in November 2011. Since then, the content and form of the research has evolved considerably. I am grateful to my supervisors, Robert Parker, for his expertise and patience, and to Milena Melfi, who initiated me into the study of archaeology and always believed in my work, even when I did not.

Among the scholars, colleagues and friends, who at various levels have contributed, also with their constructive criticisism and questions, in developing my research, I wish to thank Peter Agócs, Ilaria Caloi, Silvia Piccini, Danilo Nati and Ian Rutherford.

I am also grateful to Lieve Donnellan, Ugo Fantasia, Mario Lombardo and Elisabetta Onnis for sending me their own works long before their actual publication; and the whole staff of the Ephoria of Antiquities at Ioannina, who have been consistently helpful down these years.

A special thank-you also goes to Cathy Morgan and John K. Davies, who a long time ago showed me the importance of context and landscape. Our visits to archaeological Greek sites widened my scholarly perception and approach to the ancient world.

I could have not carried out this project without the financial assistance of the Onassis Foundation and the Margo Tytus Programme of the University of Cincinnati. I also gratefully acknowledge the financial support for publication by the Sezione di Storia, Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici of the Università degli studi di Macerata. I wish to thank the staff of all institutes

and libraries visited during these years, the Sackler Library, the British School at Athens, the Italian School of Archaeology, the Blegen Library and the Classics Department of the University of Cincinnati, the Bibliothek of the Institut für Alte Geschichte und Altertumskunde, Papyrologie und Epigraphik of the Universität Wien and the Biblioteca di Scienze Archeologiche e Storiche dell'Antichità of the Università degli studi di Macerata.

Such book would have never been possible without the support of my sister and parents, who provided me with biggest gifts of character, ostinacy, practical sense and resilience; and Prof. Luisa Moscati, *magistra optima atque carissima*, who, a long time ago, first intuited the potential of this research. She sustained, encouraged and guided me during the work and undertook the enormous job of editing my style and correcting inaccuracies.

The responsability for the remaining shortcomings is of course only mine.

Special encouragement came my way from Yuri A. Marano, whose love, critical judgement and wide knowledge of the Classical world, have been often indispensable, especially in these last years.

The last thought goes to Alessandro, questioning engineer, avid reader, beloved brother(-in-law), but most of all Viola's *papà speciale*. To him this book is dedicated.

Osimo, September 2017

J.P.

Note

The abbreviations of ancient authors and texts are in general those given in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, occasionally with familiar variation; references to modern scholarship generally take the form of Author-Date quotations, but short forms, all listed in the list of abbreviations, have sometimes been used.

Unless otherwise noted, translations in the texts are my own.

εἰς μνήμην τοῦ
Alessandro Candelari
(05.01.1984 – 20.06.2017)

Introduction

> Oh! where, Dodona! is thine aged Grove,
> Prophetic Fount, and Oracle divine?
> What valley echoed the response of Jove?
> What trace remaineth of the Thunderer's shrine?
> All, all forgotten—and shall Man repine
> That his frail bonds to fleeting life are broke?
> Cease, Fool! the fate of Gods may well be thine:
> Wouldst thou survive the marble or the oak?
> When nations, tongues, and worlds must sink beneath the stroke!
> (Lord Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto II, 53)

Any work aiming to reconstruct the history of a major ancient Greek sanctuary from its very beginnings comes face to face with two *auctoritates*: Pausanias and previous modern scholarship dealing with the same issue(s). The author of the *Periegesis* supplies decisive information on and full accounts of the sacred landscape of major and minor sanctuaries, which help the modern reader and archaeologist to reconstruct in detail these places of ancient cult and pilgrimage[1]. As for Dodona, alas, Pausanias, although he might have visited the site[2], is quite tight-lipped, limiting himself to describing the sanctuary only by its rough position in north-western Greece, i.e. Thesprotia, and by mentioning a ἱερόν and a sacred oak worth seeing – γῆς δὲ τῆς Θεσπρωτίδος ἔστι μέν που καὶ ἄλλα θέας ἄξια, ἱερόν τε Διὸς ἐν Δωδώνῃ καὶ ἱερὰ τοῦ θεοῦ φηγός[3]. In another passage he mentions the Dodona oak again as the second most ancient tree

[1] The term "pilgrimage" to describe journeys for religious purposes in pre-Christian societies and cultures is widespread, but controversial (Dillon 1997; Elsner, Rutherford 2005; Scullion 2005; Rutherford 2013).

[2] Musti, Beschi 1982, p. XXI and p. 303; Bearzot 1988, pp. 106-107; Zizza 2006, p. 134.

[3] Paus. I, 17, 5.

in antiquity after the Lygos at Samos[4], but no further specification is given about the sacred landscape, the monuments and votives within the *temenos* of the sanctuary of Zeus. Therefore, the *auctoritas* of Pausanias, for the study of the oracular sanctuary of Dodona is noticeably weak, at least in shaping *a priori* the sacred landscape without the support of material evidence[5]. The second touchstone, against which all is to be measured, is modern scholarship. The history of studies on Dodona can be divided into four main phases: the search for the site; the publication of the archaeological research of C. Carapanos in 1878; the appearance in 1967 of H.W. Parke's *The Oracles of Zeus, Dodona, Olympia, Ammon*[6] and a few years later, in 1971, of the first archaeological guide to the site by S.I. Dakaris[7]; and, lastly, the very recent blooming of studies on the Epirote oracle after the publication of Lhôte's and Dakaris, Vokotopoulou and Christidis' collections of the oracular tablets of Dodona[8].

«To ascertain the site of Dodona would seem now to require a response from the oracle itself». With these words in 1839 Wordsworth, Bishop of Lincoln, expressed all the frustration of 18th-and-19th-century travellers who had been attempting to determine the site of the most ancient oracle of the Greek world[9]. At the time, the exact location of Dodona in north-western Greece was a mystery, the most ancient oracular shrine of the ancient Greek world «continuait à se dérober aux recherches des voyageurs et des archéologues»[10]. Centuries of oblivion had literally buried the sanctuary of Dodona under dust and earth, frustrating the curiosity of travellers and giving birth to numerous hypotheses about its exact location in the region of modern Ioannina.

4 Paus. VII, 25, 1.

5 Little help from other sources, for example Polybius (IV, 67, 3-4), who touches briefly upon the *stoa*, the *anathemata* and the *hiera oikia*.

6 Parke 1967.

7 Dakaris 1971.

8 Lhôte 2006; Dakaris, Vokotopoulou, Christidis 2013 (from now on DVC).

9 Wordsworth 1839, p. 142; Lincoln 1881, p. 229.

10 Carapanos 1878, p. 2.

Travel literature along with illustrations of ancient ruins proliferated in the 18th and 19th centuries, especially once the first "archaeological" explorations had commenced[11]. This widely spread European phenomenon inspired erudite scholars, military officers, noble men and diplomats from France to Greece, from Germany to Italy, to write travel guides, finding their model and archetype in Pausanias' *Description of Greece*[12]. Travellers and painters fixed their attention on ancient Mediterranean locations, especially those less explored, remote and more exotic, as the sanctuary of Zeus at Dodona. In Sir William Gell's words, in the 1830s Dodona was «one of the most interesting and difficult questions in Greek geography». The ancient toponym(s) had not survived[13] and no trace of the ancient glory of the oracular shrine of Zeus was apparent. This nourished the curiosity of travellers and scholars, who, puzzled by the shifting sub-regional divisions of ancient Epirus (Thesprotia, Molossia and Chaonia) through the centuries[14], exercised themselves with conjectures. The ancient authors – first and foremost Homer, Herodotus and Strabo – in their hands, they had but windy mountains, a river (i.e. the legendary ancient Tomaros chain and the Acheloos), and a large assemblage of oaks as their vague geographical references to guide them.

Among the most famous travellers in Epirus was Lord Byron, who visited and admired the remains of the theatre at a site that only sixty years later was identified as Dodona. On the 19th of November 1811, Byron wrote to Rev. Richard Valpy, fellow of the Society of Antiquarians and Headmaster of Reading School, communicating that they had not «discovered anything worthy in the Levant, except an amphitheatre about three hours ride from Yanina in Epirus»[15]. Likewise, these ruins of the theatre

[11] It is indeed not really correct to define these first explorations as archaeological excavations, since the birth of archaeology as a scientific discipline based on stratigraphical investigations dates to the 1920s-1950s (see for instance, Woolley 1930; Wheeler 1943; Wheeler 1954).

[12] Eisner 1991, pp. 89-124.

[13] The south-eastern region of Ioannina, named Tomarochoria, indeed misled Leake (Dakaris 1971, p. 13).

[14] Already Strabo VII, 7, C 326-329.

[15] Marchand 1973, p. 134; Byron took the theatre for an amphitheatre.

attracted others visitors, none of whom identified the place as the seat of Zeus Dodonaeus[16].

The first identification of the site, on the basis of its geographical position and the disproportionate size of the theatre in relation to the city, was made in 1819 by Thomas Leverton Donaldson, a British architect, who only in 1830 published the plan of the building in a supplement of the *Antiquities of Athens*. He advanced the hypothesis that the site may have been ancient Dodona[17].

However, Christopher Lincoln-Wordsworth is commonly considered the first "discoverer" of the exact location of Dodona[18]. His article "Where was Dodona?", appeared first in his book *Greece: Pictorial, Descriptive and Historical*[19], and, later, in the wake of Carapanos' discoveries, was reproduced as an excerpt in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* in 1881[20]. He strongly suggested that the ruins on the eastern slope of Mount Olytza, in the middle of a plain South-West of Ioannina and known by the modern name of Kastro or Dramisos, should be recognised as Dodona. Despite the distinct presence of a fortified citadel, Wordsworth, like Donaldson, dismissed the hypothesis that the visible remains belonged to Passaron, the seat of Pyrrhus[21], because of the discrepancy between the size of the urban centre and the magnificence of the buildings placed outside the city-walls: a large theatre and the vestiges of two temple-like buildings, one of which sported the fragments of fourteen still-standing columns. The singular presence of a monumental theatre, unusual for this district, made Wordsworth assume that it should have been designed not «for the entertainment of the citizens only», but rather it served «as

[16] Hobhouse 1817, pp. 66-67; Leake 1835, pp. 263-268; Hughes 1830, p. 488; Lear 1851, pp. 379-380 and pp. 385-386; Pouqueville 1820, pp. 145-146; Holland 1815, pp. 142-147; Hawkins 1820.

[17] Donaldson 1830, pp. 46-47.

[18] On the paternity of the "first" identification Potts 2010, pp. 21-23; Manopoulos 2012.

[19] Wordsworth 1839, pp. 247-253.

[20] Lincoln 1881.

[21] Of this opinion also Pouqueville 1820, pp. 467-469; Donaldson 1830, pp. 46-47; Bowen 1852, pp. 205-207.

an attraction for strangers, and provided gratification for those who were brought there by the celebrity of the oracle».

The explorations at Dodona in 1875 by Constantinos Carapanos removed any doubt about the identification of the site.

Carapanos' *Dodone and ses ruines* is the first monograph on the most ancient oracular shrine of the Greek world[22]; it starts with a narrative description of the valley and the fortified city, then passing on to the major findings, buildings and small votives, brought to light in 1875. Before the excavations «le théâtre et l'enceinte fortifiée étaient en apparence les ruines le plus importantes»[23], but after a ten-month campaign, carried out over an area of 20,000 square metres, Carapanos had brought to light the remains of a Christian Basilica, of the so-called temple of Zeus, of the *bouleuterion*, of the *stoa* with 36 pedestals, of the South and East entrances of the sanctuary, of the retaining wall in front of the terrace of the so-called temple of Zeus and of a large rectangular building. The area within the fortified city was only partly excavated. The numerous traces of burning and fire within the sacred area were interpreted as proof of several destructions at Dodona to be linked, especially, with Aemilius Paulus' conquest of the region.

From the very first explorations of the area, an extraordinary quantity and quality of bronzes emerged. The items, having been brought to light, were drawn in detail and presented in the second volume of Carapanos' publication[24].

Although being a 19th century work, with all the limitations of the day (e.g. drawings with no measurements, the absence of pictures), *Dodone and ses ruines* was rather avant-garde for its time and with no further purport than to inform its audience of the outstanding results of the recent excavations. In the wake of this publication a few short articles on the epigraphic and archaeological discoveries of Dodona appeared in journals and miscellanea, without adding anything substantial to the debate.

22 Carapanos 1878, *I-II*.
23 Carapanos 1878, pp. 2-4.
24 Carapanos 1878, *II*.

Almost ninty years have elapsed before a new substantial step forward. In 1967 H.W. Parke published a monograph on the oracular sanctuaries of Zeus, in which Dodona occupies a privileged position[25]. More than half of the book is concerned with the literary evidence mentioning, from Homer to Latin sources, the shrine of Zeus. Very little room, only a few pages, is left to address the epigraphic and material evidence, which is treated separately. The book owing to the author's soleness in collecting and analysing the texts is still a milestone for the study of the Epirote shrine, but is not particularly helpful for reconstructing its interregional and pan-Hellenic importance: the arrangement of sources, approached according to a chronological order, makes us lose sight of the historical development of the sanctuary.

Few years later S.I. Dakaris published the *Archaeological Guide to Dodona*, in English, as a contribution to the newborn archaeological museum of Ioannina[26], almost a decade after the publication of the first comprehensive results of the archaeological investigations (namely *Το ιερόν της Δωδώνης*[27]) he was carrying out on the site with D. Evangelides[28]. In both cases, Dakaris examines the site and its main structures, describing their development from the early prehistoric phases up to the end of Hellenistic times, certain that the life of the sanctuary ended with Aemilius Paulus' conquest of the region. Little space is given to literary sources that are often mentioned *en passant* merely to support the narration and highlight the exoticness of the shrine, i.e. Herodotus' account of the foundation of the oracle.

The location of Dodona in Epirus, a region on the fringes of the ancient Greek world, has contributed perhaps to relegating the topic to a marginal position in modern studies even in important works on ancient sanctuaries[29]. Those who have

[25] Parke 1967.

[26] Dakaris 1971.

[27] Evangelides, Dakaris 1959.

[28] Evangelides and Dakaris co-worked at Dodona from the first years of the 1950s up to Evangelides' sudden demise in 1958. The archaeological excavations re-started in 1965 and proceeded, almost without interruption, under the direction of Dakaris until his death in 1996.

[29] No mention in Schachter, Bingen 1992. Very cursory references in Marinatos, Hägg 1993 and Alcock, Osborne 1994.

dealt with the issue after Parke and Dakaris have focused on particular aspects, such as those concerning the processes of divination and Dodona's religious officials[30], or have concentrated on particular political figures, as Pyrrhus[31], or on *ethne*, as the Molossians involved in many ways with the life and administration of the sanctuary[32]. In doing so, all remain basically reliant on Parke's and Dakaris' accounts.

In general Dodona has long been considered a peripheral sanctuary, mainly visited by individuals desiring to know the future for matters of private significance, such as health, family, business, inheritance and moving residence[33]. Therefore, the importance and role of the oracular shrine of Dodona in ancient Greek history have been underestimated.

The turning point was 2006, when a few important books came out almost simultaneously. N. Moustakis produced the first monograph on Epirote sanctuaries, in which Dodona played a considerable part[34]. The work, like Parke's, was not a full monograph on the site, but it did analyse very briefly some of the literary and epigraphic evidence concerning the role of Dodona between the 6th and 1st centuries BC within the circuit of Epirote shrines.

É. Lhôte's publication[35] of 167 oracular tablets[36], which until then had appeared sporadically in archaeological reports

30 Rachet 1962; Gartziou-Tatti 1990; Rudhardt 2006; Marsá Gonzáles 2007; Georgoudi 2012; Viscardi 2012-2013; Parker 2015.

31 Lévêque 1957; Santagati Ruggeri 1997; Zodda 1997.

32 Franke 1955; Larsen 1968; Cabanes 1976; Cabanes 1981; Davies 2000; Funke 2000b; Bowden 2003; Meyer 2013.

33 Prestianni Giallombardo 2002.

34 Moustakis 2006.

35 Lhôte 2006.

36 Very narrow lead bands, in which the writing runs along the length of the whole support, but never carried over to the reverse. In some cases the backs have the name of the enquirer, a reference to the subject or some letters. Most of the tablets were folded or rolled so that the writing, running for the whole length of the band, is kept in the inside. Some of the tablets are clearly palimpsests, which indicate that they were often re-used, and also motivate in part the use of the lead, a ductile, soft and relatively inexpensive metal, to be scratched out and re-manipulated.

and various other short works[37], is a very significant and to some extent revolutionary contribution. His linguistic analysis of the tablets is a secure base on which to understand the sphere of influence enjoyed by the oracle of Dodona through the study of its consultants. A year later, this epigraphic collection was enriched by E. Eidinow's *Oracles and Curses*, in which few new oracular texts from Christidis' manuscript on the thousands of unpublished tablets unearthed at Dodona were reproduced with the permission of the author[38].

In the same year M. Dieterle published the first monograph on Dodona since Carapanos. The book is mainly focused on the sacred and profane architecture of the shrine from ca. 400 BC to 167 BC, while literary and epigraphic sources are treated together with almost no discussion of their content. Votives are analysed on the basis of their iconographical representations, without paying attention to their shape, place of production, dating, function and significance. A similar treatment is found in T.E. Emmerling's *Studien zu Datierung, Gestalt und Funktion der "Kultbauten" in Zeus-Heiligtum von Dodona*, where analysis of the architecture prevails and is treated in isolation, without attempting to understand the monumentalization as a more complex feature in the whole diachronic and synchronic development of the shrine[39].

The great novelty in the field is the recent posthumous publication of 4216 oracular tablets from Dodona by Dakaris, Vokotopoulou and Christidis[40]. As Parker rightly points out, «the figure of 4216 is admittedly somewhat misleading, not just because a single tablet may contribute several numbers (if written on both sides and bearing several distinct questions) but more importantly because many, in fact the vast majority, of the new texts are too fragmentary to provide any useful informa-

[37] Archaeological reports in *PAE*, *EpirChron* as well as Vokotopoulou 1992; Dakaris, Christidis, Vokotopoulou 1993; Christidis, Dakaris, Vokotopoulou 1997; Christidis, Dakaris, Vokotopoulou 1999.

[38] Eidinow 2007, p. 6.

[39] Emmerling 2012. In this sense, the short article by Quantin 2008 is more insightful.

[40] DVC.

tion[41]». Parker, moreover, remarks the provisional character of this study, which does not include most of the tablets found by Evangelides and Dakaris between 1952 and 1959 and all those from Dakaris' excavations from 1965 onwards[42]. The premature death of the three editors affected the space and quality reserved to the commentary of the enquiries, which goes little beyond the linguistic analysis, as well as the edition of the texts, which is some times rather tentative. For this reason, an international team has been engaged since 2015 in the re-edition of all the tablets under the direction of Pierre Bonnechère of the University of Montreal[43]. The project aims to publish a searchable open-access electronic database of all the tablets with an edition of the text faifthful to the original, avoiding any tentative reading, as well as an adequate commentary.

The potential of the information deducible from the published lead tablets, which contain the private and public questions of the consultants and, sometimes, also the answers of the oracle, is undisputed. Beside the enrichment of the existing onomastic *corpora*, other fields of study, relating, for example, to ancient mobility, will benefit from this cluster of evidence: the exam of private enquiries, especially those about business and trade, will highlight the intense net of contacts in the Mediterranean and provide important information on the type of goods exchanged and, in the luckiest cases, their origin and destination(s).

These documents, however important they are, are nevertheless very problematic under many respects[44]. The main issue

41 Parker 2016, p. 72.

42 Indeed Lhôte 2006 contains a few questions that are not in DVC (Parker 2016, p. 72 n. 12).

43 <https ://dodonaonline.com/>.

44 First the identity of the inscriber is difficult to ascertain, even when the name of the enquirer is expressed: who did in fact write down the questions (and the answers)? Was it the consultant or was there an official scribe? Moreover, what was the effective function of these tablets? Were they used in the divinatory practice? All the questions were written down? For what reason(s) have only a few answers survived? (On these issues Piccinini 2013b). Besides, there is a remarkable inconsistency between the oracular texts testified by inscriptions and those transmitted by literary sources (Naerebout, Beerden 2012; Luraghi 2014, pp. 236-237). Finally, while in the inscriptions Zeus is often addressed as Zeus Naios and associated to Dione, literary

that interferes with their full exploitation in the study of the catchment area of the shrine, which is the focus of this book, is chronology. These tablets are often dated on a palaeographic basis, but a relative chronological sequence, based on the letter shape, is difficult to assess as the writing of each sign is strongly dependent on the fineness of the tool used to inscribe and the thickness of the lead, a very ductile material, not to mention the writing abilities, and in general the literacy, of the inscriber (if s/he was not a scribe). Moreover, these tablets have been dated from the mid-6th century to the first half of the 2nd century BC[45], that is to say a short period compared to entire lifespan of the shrine, whose emergence as religious centre dates to the Early Iron Age and whose end is generally dated at the time of Aemilius Paulus' conquest of Epirus in 168/7 BC[46], but is certainly later[47].

Thus, in order to reconstruct the catchment area and the historical development of the shrine I have relied on various types of evidence, literary, archaeological and, when available, epigraphic, testifying to private and public devotees dedicating, consulting and performing rituals at Dodona up to the mid-4th century BC[48]. All the sources have been considered not as isolated testimonies[49], but as interconnected pieces of a complicate jigsaw.

The first unquestionable evidence of cult activity is detected in the Early Iron Age: Dodona attracted local visitors belonging

references to Zeus Naios (and Dione) are few and far between [Soph., *Od. Akanth.* 455 (Radt); Demosth. XXI, 51-54; Parke 1967, p. 68 e p. 78 n. 36].

45 Lhôte 2006, pp. 11-22.

46 Diod. VII, 7, 3; Plut. *Aem.* XXIX, 2-5.

47 Piccinini 2013c, part. pp. 190-191; Parker 2016, p. 71 n. 6. The Naia festivals were performed at Dodona up to the 3rd century AD (Cabanes 1988).

48 The role of Dodona as religious and political centre of the Epirote *ethne* from the 4th century BC onwards is outside the scope of this work. On this issue Moustakis 2006, pp. 86-90; Meyer 2013; Piccinini 2016a.

49 For this reason isolated pieces of evidence, such as the consultations by the inhabitants of Rhegion in c. 475 BC (Lhôte 2006 nos. 154-155; Vokotopoulou 1992, p. 78; Lombardo forthcoming), the small tripod mentioning Sotairos from Cyprus (Piccinini 2013a) or the graffito Ναίῳ on a 6th century BC black-glazed cup from Bérézan, the ancient Borystenes/Olbia in the Black Sea (Solovyov 2005; «REG», CXXII, 2009, p. 502, no. 361, no. 263), unavailing in establishing (the beginning of) long-lasting relationships between Dodona and people from a specific area, are here not taken into account.

Fig. 1. The catchment area of the shrine (illustration © author)

to local *ethne* and no element points to its popularity stretching beyond the immediate neighbouring area (Chapter 1).

The shrine, which, according to Strabo, was first under the control of the Thesprotians and later of the Molossians[50], acquired an interregional importance only in the mid-7th century BC[51], when it started to attract devotees far beyond the Pindos mountain range and the Ionian sea. The first non-Epirote who established long-lasting relationships with Dodona were the Euboeans (Chapter 2), followed by the Corinthians, who set up a network of contacts and exchanges in the area even before the foundation of their colonies on the lower Adriatic and Ionian shores (Chapter 3).

Up to the mid-6th century BC the shrine was mainly visited by those circulating in the North-West for colonial and economic purposes, but the scenario changed when the Spartans, neighbours and allied of the Corinthians, began to display their interest for Dodona. Their devotion, variously attested from the mid-6th century BC, contributed remarkably to increase the international renown of the shrine (Chapter 5). From that moment onwards it was a *crescendo*: Dodona enticed new devotees and its catchement area increased significantly. From the end of the 6th century, the Aleuadae, from neighbouring Thessaly, focused on Dodona in order to enhance their image and strengthen their power through mythical and genealogical ties with the shrine (Chapter 6). In the 5th century the Boeotians (Chapter 6) and the Athenians (Chapter 7) began consulting, offering, sending *theoriai* and performing rituals (fig. 1)[52]. Dodona, as Delphi and Olympia, became a prime shared arena of display, participation and competition, providing virtually alternative space for internal and international political interaction.

[50] Strabo VII, 7, 11, C 328.

[51] Olympia and Delphi were already pan-Hellenic shrines in the 7th century BC (Morgan 1990; Morgan 1993).

[52] The re-dating to the 5th century BC of the musical competitions of the Naia (West 2010; Piccinini 2013a) confirms the full pan-Hellenic dimension achieved by the shrine.

Chapter 1

A Sanctuary on the Fringes of the Greek World

A Biased Perspective

In his 1974, second edition of *The Greeks Overseas*, Sir John Boardman observed «excavations in what are now Albania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria have told us much about the northern neighbours of the Greeks in the Iron Age and supplemented the scant and often imaginative testimony of ancient writers. But there is still much to be understood and although the character of the civilization of these peoples is at times quite clear, its relationship to that of Greece itself, even in the simple matter of time, is not always so straightforward»[1]. Despite the forty-year gap since Boardman's statement and an increasing number of archaeological excavations being conducted nowadays in southern Albania and northern Greece, our knowledge of the history of the region, in its political, social and economic development, is far from exhaustive[2]. For decades Epirus and Epirote matters have occupied little space in modern studies for a number of reasons, not least the complete closure and isolation of modern Albania after the Second World War, which stopped foreign archaeological excavations until the fall of the communist regime in 1991[3]. Several other interlocking elements

[1] Boardman 1974[2], pp. 233-234.

[2] The few comprehensive studies on Epirus, such as those by Franke 1955, Lepore 1962, Hammond 1967 and Cabanes 1976 need to be updated in light of recent and ongoing investigations.

[3] Exceptional and short-lived collaborations are those between Albanian and Russian archaeologists in Butrint.

are, furthermore, the basis for the marginality[4] of Epirote issues in ancient and modern scholarship, *in primis* the paucity of sources on Epirote history[5]. Epirus and in general Epirote matters are incidental and marginal topics in ancient sources[6]. In the Atheno-centric, or at most Sparto-centric, perspective of ancient historiography, Epirus, and everything it encompasses – the oracular shrine of Dodona included – represents a cultural periphery, a grey zone in which it is difficult to comprehend and contextualise events, phenomena and changes. In this border region[7], situated between Greece proper and barbarian Illyria there was, and still is, a particularly subtle distinction between what was considered truly Greek and what was not[8]. In ancient as in modern times, those living at the frontier of the Hellenic world were considered a mixed population, a melting pot, in which Greek elements were strongly mingled with local and

[4] As for the concept of marginality, liminality and core-periphery, Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin 2000, pp. 36-37, 130-131, 135-136, 233-234; Vanotti, Perassi 2004, pp. IX-X; Malkin 2005; Malkin 2011.

[5] Local Epirote historiography is especially attested in connection to the deeds of the Molossian king Pyrrhus (Proxenus' *Hypomnemata FGrHist* 703). Also Jacoby *FGrHist* III, C, VII, *Epirus*, pp. 556-565.

[6] Thuc. II, 80, 5-6. On the contrary, material and epigraphic evidence, especially from the 5th century onwards, is rather abundant. Its publication, however, is in progress (for instance *IEpidamnos*; *IApollonia*; *IBouthrotos*; *IAlbania* 2016), so these fresh data often from new excavations need to be studied first in order to enrich and clarify the vague picture put forward by literary evidence.

[7] The establishment of borders in Epirus is a very difficult task. The continuity of the land, without strong and precise geomorphic features useful to separate populations and demarcate territories, especially at its northern and southern limits, does not help. The matter is also complicated by the presence of Greek colonies on the coastal area facing the Adriatic Sea. The Greeks attempted to determine a border to separate what was Greek from what was not: Strabo (VIII, 1, 3, C 321) for instance, fixed the western limit of Hellas in the Gulf of Ambracia and the eastern in the Thermaic Gulf (Fantasia 2017, pp. 2-3). In this sense Epirus was excluded, theoretically, from Greece, but in practice the situation was more complicated, as Strabo (VII, 7, 8, C 326-327) himself admits.

[8] Populations in north-western Greece were often described as violent, bellicose and savage. Apart from Hom., *Od.* XVIII, 84-87, 116, also Thuc. I, 5, 1; II, 68, 9; II, 80, 3-6; II, 81, 4-8; II, 82; III, 94, 4-5; IV, 126. These ideas were often influenced by a sort of "geographical determinism", according to which the natural environment of a place profoundly influenced the nature of its inhabitants (Aristot., *Pol.* VII, 7, 1, 1327b; Shaw 1982-1983; Panessa 1991, pp. 123-153; Cabanes 1991, p. 70; Giorcelli Bersani 2001, p. 27; Borca 2002).

indigenous ones[9]. Areas of bilingualism[10] and the cultural and linguistic links with the Macedonians to the east and the Illyrians to the North, make the ethnic identity of the Epirote tribes and north-western *ethne* a complicate issue[11].

The geographical location of this region at the fringes of the Greek world, an aspect that is often highlighted by ancient authors[12], as well as its geomorphology are further elements that have contributed to the relegation of the topic to a marginal position in ancient and modern scholarship. Epirus is commonly known as "the Switzerland of Greece"[13] – a modern popular expression, which immediately conjures the stark difference in landscape between this area and the rest of the country, in that mountains occupy eighty-eight per cent of the territory (fig. 2): five ridges run parallel to the coast from North-West to South-East, with the Pindos chain dividing Epirus from Macedonia to the East. The central group of mountains reaches an average altitude of 2000m above sea level, while isolated peaks in north and south Epirus reach, respectively, 3000 and 4000m. Winter in Epirus is particularly severe[14] and the rainfall is much higher there than in the rest of Greece[15]. Thus the first impression of the region one has, with mountain chains running even along the coast, is that of a territory difficult to cross and rather cut off from the more compact southern block.

Yet this geographical and cultural isolation of Epirus is more apparent than real. An examination of the literary and archaeological evidence demonstrates that the region was certainly a frontier, but a very permeable one, where men, goods and ideas circulated from a very early time around a pivot: the oracular shrine of Dodona. That such a lively exchange existed on many

9 Boardman 1974², p. 235; *Inventory*, p. 338.

10 Strabo VII, 7, 8, C 326-327.

11 As for the internal and external perceptions of Epirote identity, Malkin 2001; Mari 2011. On Thucydides' ambivalence towards Aitolians, Antonetti 1990a, pp. 71-76; Malkin 1998a, pp. 145-146; Bommelije, Doorn 1987; Grainger 1999; Scholten 2000; Landucci Gattinoni 2004.

12 Hdt. IV, 33; Thuc. II, 80, 3-6.

13 Hammond 1997, p. 12.

14 Aristot., *Met.* I, 14, 352a-b; Liv. XLIII, 21, 7-8.

15 Hammond 1967, pp. 14-17; Cabanes 1991, p. 70.

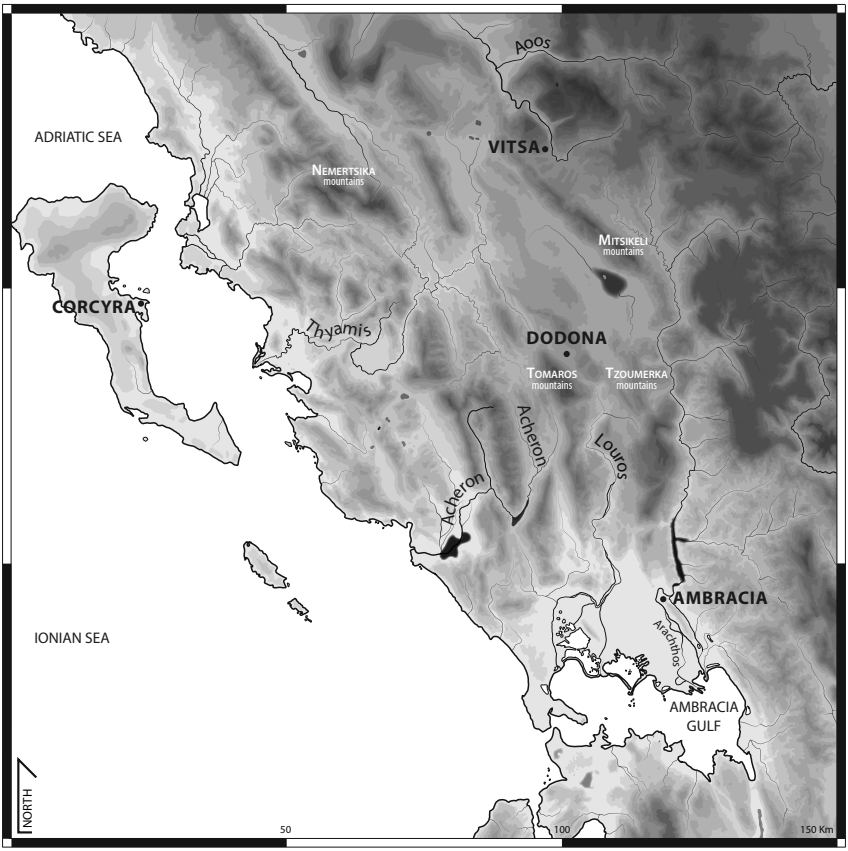

Fig. 2. Map of Epirus (illustration © author)

different levels was likely the basis for the growing importance of the oracle of Zeus in a regional and interregional context. As a matter of fact, the territory was easily traversable via numerous routes, connecting the North with the South and the East with the West[16]. The two main Gulfs, i.e. the northern Gulf of Aulon and the southern Gulf of Ambracia, guaranteed good landing places and valuable access to the mainland from the sea.

[16] The most famous example is the *via Egnatia*.

Other smaller inlets next to the coast provided useful and safe anchorage to those who tried to approach land.

Moreover, from the mountains many rivers – namely the Aoos, the Thyamis, the Acheron, the Louros and the Arachthos – flow into the Adriatic and Ionian Seas. As in antiquity, most of them are still navigable for long stretches[17] and with their tributaries they create a complex network of communication. Their alluvial plains and valleys, then, also provided continuous routes to access internal areas. From the north coast down to the south, an ancient as much as a modern traveller could begin his journey inland from, at least, three different places: the Gulf of Aulon, near the Thyamis promontory; the natural nook in front of the island of Paxos, in proximity to the outlet of the river Acheron; and the Gulf of Ambracia. By water, the easiest route would have been to go inland, eastwards, by following the course of the main rivers, which were navigable for long tracts. All routes passed close to Dodona, but the so-called *Via Sacra*, which actually reached the shrine, seems to have started from the Gulf of Ambracia and would have followed the river Louros[18].

Routes crossing the Pindos Mountains from West to East can also be traced. Mainly they followed the valleys of the rivers Aoos and Drinos in the North from the Gulf of Aulon, and Acheloos in the South from the Gulf of Ambracia, at least for the first stages[19]. After following the alluvial plain of the Aoos and its tributary Drinos up to the foot of the Nemertsika Mountains, a hypothetical traveller would have gone around the chain either to its left or its right, so as to reach the valley at the foot of the Mitsikeli mountains and on through the plain of Ioannina. To reach the next step, Thessaly, one would have crossed the Tzumerka Mountains, in the south Pindos range, going towards Kalambaka. From the South the route proceeded in the same way, up to the river Acheloos towards Gardiki and,

[17] Lepore 1962, pp. 12-13; Hammond 1967, pp. 14-17; Soueref 1993, p. 29.

[18] Hammond 1967, pp. 33-34; Casson 1968, pp. 289-294; De Gennaro, Santoriello 1994, p. 397.

[19] Dion. Hal. I, 51, 1 claims that Aeneas began his journey to Dodona after landing in the Gulf of Ambracia.

then, straight on to Kalambaka. Apart from these main routes described above, it is important to note the existence of several minor passages, mainly known to local shepherds and woodcutters. A recent study of the human settlements in the internal part of the region points out that most sites were located along the main transhumance routes[20]. The archaeological evidence shows that all these paths were probably used from the Bronze Age down to the 6th century BC and beyond[21].

Dodona as a Landmark and Crossroads

An examination of Epirote exchange networks in the Bronze Age and the analysis of the early finds in Dodona overturn the idea of Epirus as an isolated region. Archaeological evidence from Epirote sites is mostly unpublished, but recent studies on the Aegean imports found there highlight their outstanding presence at a very early stage. Iacono's work[22], mainly based on Onnis' research[23], constitutes a fundamental exposition of how from the Middle Helladic III onwards, i.e. Epirote Middle Bronze Age (from c. 1750 BC), Dodona represented a significant node in the circulation of "external" goods in the region[24]. The importance of this study, whose strength is not in a quantitative approach, but in the variety and quality of findings from the region[25], is twofold. On the one hand, it offers a methodology that can be applied to following historical periods; on the other, it spotlights Epirus' lack of isolation and the centrality

[20] Dausse 2004, pp. 177-189. These roads had their strategic importance during military campaigns (Hammond 1967, pp. 34-35; Melfi, Piccinini 2012, pp. 37-50).

[21] Lepore 1962, p. 13.

[22] Iacono 2014.

[23] Onnis 2008a; Onnis 2008b.

[24] "Exogenous" items, i.e. swords, daggers, knives, double axes, spearheads, Mycenaean pottery, etc., are considered together with their find-spots, i.e. tumuli, necropolis, settlements, etc. Iacono 2014 (on the basis of Onnis 2008a; Onnis 2008b; Wardle 1977; Tartaron 2004) notes that in the Late Helladic Age the axis and the centre of all these traffics shifted from north to south Epirus. In the Middle Helladic Period the majority of exchanges concentrated on sites in between Corcyra and the Epirote coast (in the area of modern Valona).

[25] Onnis 2008a; Onnis 2008b; Iacono 2014.

of Dodona within a network of exchange. In the light of recent network analysis[26] – according to which the focus is not on each archaeological record, but on the ties and interconnections between find-spots and material culture – synchronic distribution maps, highlighting the network of Aegean imports for Bronze Age Epirus, point out the centrality, or rather the "inbetweenness-centrality"[27] of Dodona in this communication and exchange network from the Late Helladic Period (c. 1400 BC) onwards. During the last phases of the Middle Helladic Period in Epirus (c. 2100 BC), Dodona was only one of the nodes in this network of exchange, which was more oriented towards the North and the coastline and had its centre in the area around the modern town of Valona. From the Late Helladic IIIA, i.e. Epirote Late Bronze Age (c. 1400 BC), the axis moved inland and Dodona became a key spot within this web of nodes. The reasons for such a shift are unknown, but it might not be too hazardous a guess to identify the agents of these exchanges – likely connected with the control and exploitation of minerals in North and inland Epirus[28] – as the local transhumant shepherds, who seasonally moved from internal regions to the coast in search of grazing.

Because of the importance of transhumance in the socio-economic organization of Epirus[29], it is logical to think that these "exogenous" goods were not exchanged randomly within a territory, but that these commodities represented bargaining chips between locals and outlanders, and that their circulation reproduced – perhaps with a little variation – the same circuits used by locals for their communication and dealings.

The actual geomorphology of the Epirote landscape, with mountains occupying most of the territory, and its small, unevenly distributed population affected both the political

[26] Malkin, Constantakopoulou, Panagopoulou 2009; Malkin 2011; Broodbank 2013, *passim*.

[27] The theory of betweenness-centrality was proposed by the American sociologist L. Freeman, according to whom a node in a communication network is central to the extent that it falls on the shortest paths between pairs of other nodes (Freeman 1977).

[28] Mainly gold, silver, amber, see *infra* and Onnis 2008a and Onnis 2008b.

[29] Georgoudi 1974, pp. 155-185; Skydsgaard 1988; Chandezon 2006.

and socio-economic organization of the people living there[30]. In such an environment – a large territory, plains confined to the coast and river courses, population scattered in small settlements – the socio-political organizational structure of the *ethnos* fitted perfectly[31]. Ancient sources[32] and a few case studies of sites in Molossia[33] have highlighted the lack of proper urban development, that is to say a political organization based on a *polis*-system[34], as well as the marked pastoral character of the economy of the region.

Agriculture was practised[35], but the main activity appears to have been sheep and cattle rearing[36]. Ancient authors document an abundance of herds for Epirus, especially of cattle and sheep[37]. Hesiod mentions Hellopia in Epirus as a place with «[…] many crops and good meadowland, wealthy in flocks and shambling cattle; therein dwell men rich in sheep and rich in cattle […]»[38]. According to Hecataeus and Pseudo-Scylax, the

30 Hammond 1997, p. 26; Dakaris 1985, pp. 103-104; Dausse 2011.

31 As for the prevalence of *ethne* in ancient northern Greece, Sordi 1997, pp. 87-108; Brock, Hodkinson 2000, pp. 21-30; Morgan 2003, esp. pp. 4-16.

32 Thuc. I, 5; II, 80, 5-6; Arist., *Historia Animalium* VIII, 7, 595b; Ps.-Scylax 32.

33 Vitsa and Liatovouni *in primis*, respectively Vokotopoulou 1986 and Dakaris 1982, pp. 357-375.

34 In inland communities *poleis* are attested not before the 4th century BC (*Inventory*, pp. 338-339).

35 Hes., *Eoiai*, fr. 240 (Merkelbach, West) = 181 (Most) writes about the Epirote agricultural wealth. Hammond 1997, p. 26, pp. 40-41. Lycurgus (*In Leocratem*, 26) testifies to corn imports from Epirus; Liv. XLIV, 16, 2 and Caes., *BC* III, 42 and 45 testify to the abundance of cereals in north Epirus; Plut., *Flam*. V, 1 writes about enormous stocks of provisions in 198 BC; Virg., *Georg*. I, 8 mentions the Chaonian acorn.

36 Other important activities were connected to the exploitation of natural resources, such as the cutting of timber and mineral extraction. The region is particularly rich in forests, whose trees were used for the construction of boats, and precious materials, such as silver and marble. On the importance of timber in the ancient world (Meiggs 1982).

37 Arist., *Historia Animalium* III, 21, 522b; VIII, 7, 595b; Varro, *RR* II, 1, 2; 2, 20; 5, 6; 9, 3.

38 Hes., *Eoiai*, fr. 240 (Merkelbach, West) = 181 (Most). Archaeological evidence does not support the literary sources in this instance: we would have expected to find great quantities of zoomorphic figurines at Dodona, as at Olympia, but for the Late Bronze Age period only very few horses and hounds have been brought to light (Vokotopoulou 1973, pp. 55-56). Later in the 6th century BC bulls are reproduced on some decorations of a few bronze vessels [Mildeberg Collection no. 148 (Walker 1996, pp. 175-176, fig. 276; Rimon, Shchori 1999, p. 27, fig. 47; Dieterle 2007, p.

Erytheian plain, whence Heracles drove the cattle of Geryon[39], was also located in Epirus; and Pindar describes «far-stretching Epirus where cattle-pasturing lofty forelands shelve down from Dodona to the Ionian straits»[40]. Likewise, Aristotle and later authors stress the size and quality of Epirote cattle[41]. Additionally, according to ancient sources there were royal herds of sheep and cattle at the court of Pyrrhus[42].

Seasonally, men and their herds moved along the watercourses and plains, which presented easy and natural routes, providing watering and pasture. The shepherds guided their animals into the mountains to find new and better meadows, preferring to go through passes and valleys than to cross the highest peaks. An intricate network of routes connecting adjacent regions, as already observed, criss-crossed Epirus[43]. The *via Egnatia* was very likely one of them in origin, and was probably exploited long before the arrival of the Romans. These paths, although they have only recently begun to be mapped out archaeologically[44], constituted the basis for the relationships between Epirus and neighbouring regions. Through them, contacts were established by shepherds moving over Pindos and practising a rough form of economy by exchanging goods and ideas with communities they passed along the way[45]. Men, commodities,

367 F 104); Paris, Louvre, LO MNC 1782 (De Ridder 1913, p. 19 no. 92, pl. 10 no. 92; Dieterle 2007, p. 367 F 104a); Ioannina, AM 156 (*EpeirChron* 1935, p. 228 no. 4, pl. 19 b 21; Vokotopoulou 1973, p. 73; Dieterle 2007, p. 374 F 375)].

[39] Hecat. *FGrHist* 1 F 349; Ps.-Scylax 26.

[40] Pind., *Nem.* IV, 51-53.

[41] Arist., *Historia Animalium* III, 21, 522b; Plin., *N.H.* VIII, 45 and 176; Varro, *RR* II, 6 (*pecuarias habuerunt in Epiro magnas*) and II, 5, 10; Hesych., s.v. Κεστρινικοὶ βόες; *Suda*, s.v. Λαρινοὶ βόες.

[42] Plut., *Pyrrh.* V; Arist., *Historia Animalium* III, 21, 522b; VIII, 7, 595b; Varro, *RR* II, 9, 5.

[43] Lepore 1962, p. 13; Dausse 2011. These roads had their strategic importance during military campaigns (Melfi, Piccinini 2012).

[44] A recent project, *Crossing Pindos: Passage and Defense*, carried out by the University of Thessaloniki under the supervision of Prof. Y. Pikoulas between 2002 and 2006, attempted to reconstruct the local road network of ancient Epirus and Macedonia, clarifying the economic transactions between these two regions.

[45] Dakaris 1985, p. 104; Hammond 1997, pp. 34-45; Prendi 2002, part. p. 88; Douzougli, Zachos 2002. Vokotopoulou 1986, pp. 255-257 attributes the responsibility for the spread of pottery cat. IV found in Epirus to the shepherds of Pindos and central Macedonia in the 15th and 14th centuries BC. Whether the same

information, ideas and social ties circulated and travelled along with the herds, crossing the borders of Epirus[46]. It seems that at a very early stage the sanctuary of Dodona lay at the centre of this web of paths and routes, perhaps acting, at least at the beginning, as a landmark for local shepherds.

Transhumance as a form of socio-economic organization entails support locations as is demonstrated by semi-permanent or ephemeral forms of inhabitations, similar to those of contemporary shepherds; it also necessitates a mental topological map[47]. Located on a plateau not far from the plain and lake of Ioannina, the site of Dodona likely first worked as a landmark within the "hodological space" of the transhumant routes[48]. In this network of tracks, the orientation depended on natural indicators: the shepherd found his bearings for pastures and rivers by following, in succession, fixed distinctive markers, such as rivers, lakes, peculiar-shaped peaks, landscape anomalies, etc. The area around Dodona is particularly dotted by natural landmarks, which likely contributed, on the one hand, to the construction of the virtual "hodological" map of the transhumant shepherds back and forth from mountains to sea and, on the other, to signify first to the herdsman and later to pilgrims, the proximity of the shrine. Apart from the long and narrow plateau where the shrine is situated, the landscape

routes were followed by merchants as well in later periods or whether the Epirote economy always remained in the hands of the transhumant shepherds is hard to establish.

[46] A significant example is provided by the Corinthian and Laconian imports, mainly bronze artefacts, found in the necropoleis of Vitsa and Trébénishté from the 8th to the 4th centuries BC. For Vitsa, Vokotopoulou 1986, p. 340; Vokotopoulou 1987; Morgan 1988, pp. 316-322; for Trébénishté, Stibbe 2003; Kuzman 1985, pp. 65-67; Bouzek 2000, pp. 36-37.

[47] Kontogiorgos 2008; also the study on Sarakatsani shepherds by Campbell 1964.

[48] The father of the notion of "hodological space", as a consequence of "field theory", is the psychologist K. Lewin, who first elaborated it to explain human personal perception and behaviour in a specific environment (Lewin 1936). Such a theory, according to which each human being relates to the surrounding space in a very subjective and intuitive way, creating points of reference to be remembered in future, has been applied in Greek history to describe ancient mapping and travelling. Fundamental works here are Janni 1984; Gehrke 1998a; Gehrke 1998b; Brodersen 1995.

around Dodona is marked by other idiosyncratic natural signs: the plain of Ioannina and the lake; the towering mass of Mt. Olytsika (ancient Tomaros) that dominates the valley and its multiple springs[49]; the valley that acts as a watershed for two rivers, the Louros and the Thyamis (and its tributary Smolitsa, whose source is at the northern limit of the plateau). The most distinctive element, however, was the so-called *theogephyra*, "god's bridge", a natural bridge of conglomerate boulders located at the southern head of the valley[50].

The importance of Dodona as a nodal location within exchange networks and the periodic movements from the mountains to the coast and *vice versa* finds parallel cases in the sanctuaries of Olympia, Thermos, Delphi and Kalapodi. Because of a series of natural landmarks, these places claimed a significant position within the communication networks of the local shepherds, first as meeting points and later as cult places.

The location of the sanctuary of Olympia, along the main transhumant routes of Elis, contributed significantly to the emergence of the site as a sacred place[51]. As in the case of Dodona, the valley in which the shrine of Zeus Olympios was established was at the confluence of two rivers – the Kladeios is a tributary of the Alpheios, next to Mount Kronos and a Helladic tumulus, in other words in a spot with natural and artificial markers easy to detect season after season, year after year. Slightly different is the case of Delphi, lying at the intersection of two main roads, one North-South oriented and another East-West, all passing around Mount Parnassos. Delphi became a point through which all transhumant shepherds were obliged to pass on their way to the Itea plain[52]. The sanctuary of Apollo at Thermos in Aetolia, which acquired federal importance only from 367 BC onwards, was located on the north-east side of the Trichonis lake, east of a small plateau at the foot of Mounts Lakkos, Tymphrestis

[49] Also highlighted by ancient authors: Theopomp. *FGrHist* 115 F 319 (= Plin., *N.H.* IV, 1, 2); Hygin., *Astron.* II, 23.

[50] Another *theogephyra* lies close by, in the area of Zitsa (Hammond 1967, pp. 169-173; Hammond 1997, pp. 16-19).

[51] Taita 2007, pp. 83-89 with previous bibliography.

[52] Wagner-Hasel 2000, pp. 266-281; Wagner-Hasel 2002, pp. 163-164.

and Korax, belonging to the Pindos chain. This religious centre was not along the normal communication routes of Aetolia, but its position and increasing importance can be explained only if it were a meeting point and crossroads within the paths used by the shepherds in Aetolia next to the lake[53]. Both the sanctuary of Isthmia and that of Kalapodi had the same key spot in interregional communication networks. Isthmia, at the crossroads of the paths connecting the Corinthian and Saronic Gulfs, between Corinth and Athens, was very likely «a small shrine along the road, serving travellers and local inhabitants alike, and owing its popularity during the 8th century to the increased traffics along the Isthmus»[54]. Kalapodi occupied a central position between the Corinthian Gulf and Thessaly, controlling the path of Hyampolis on the main way to Phocis. Because of its easy access and centrality, Kalapodi became an ideal meeting place and later a cult site.

In this sense the sanctuary of Dodona is not exceptional and atypical: the shrine worked, at least at the beginning, as a landmark in transhumant circuits, according to a well-known pattern in ancient Greek religious history[55].

From Settlement to Shrine

The early frequentation by local shepherds in the first phases of the life of Dodona is well documented archaeologically. During the Bronze Age, the area later occupied by the *bouleuterion* was possibly inhabited by transhumant shepherds: the discovery of several post-holes belonging to an apsidal building, within which a pottery kiln and a modest quantity of locally made potsherds were found[56], along with numerous stone loom-

[53] Philippson, Kirsten 1958, pp. 342-343; Kirsten 1958, p. 567; Kirsten, Kraiker 1967, p. 763; Antonetti 1990a, *passim*; Antonetti 1990b, p. 25.

[54] Morgan 1996, pp. 47-48.

[55] Sourvinou-Inwood 1993; Morgan 1993.

[56] Wardle 1977, pp. 153-199; Tartaron 2004, pp. 20-23, p. 148. A few Mycenaean imports were also detected as well as local imitations, such as a *kylix* in crude local fabric (Hammond 1997, p. 40), having its twin in Kastrisa (Wardle 1977, p. 177).

weights and axes for daily use, clay spheres (perhaps the beads of a necklace), metal bracelets and decorative spirals, suggests (seasonal) occupation by herdsmen and their families in the Middle Helladic and Late Helladic III. These traces of structures and portable objects can hardly be thought of as votives dedicated to a divinity or wares and tools for ritual banquets, but rather they evoke domestic contexts.

Apart from these items, the great majority of finds dating to the 14th-10th centuries BC, consist of (double) axes, swords, spears and spear-heads. They cannot be considered straightforwardly as cult objects, especially since we lack the precise definition of the context of the find[57]. In some cases their function as offerings appears to be more evident, as in the case of the axes that were intentionally broken, the miniatures and those chased with a clear decorative intention, such as the pendant *bucranion* axe[58], but we cannot exclude the possibility that they are representative of domestic cult.

From the Early Iron Age the function of the site shifted fundamentally. No trace of human occupation of the area persists, but rather the first unquestionable evidence of cult activity is detected. Apart from an iron double axe and eight spearheads[59], other finds, ranging from large bronzes to little pendants, give a useful indication as to the change of function of the site.

As with the sanctuaries of Olympia and Delphi, evidence of a distinctive change in the function of the area emerges[60]:

[57] Bronze Age metals in general might be interpreted either as votive offerings or as precious material hidden in a hoard.

[58] Athens, NM 183 (Carapanos 1878, p. 100 no. 4, pl. LIV, 6).

[59] To this period a double-holed handle, considered perhaps too optimistically as an Italic offering by Kilian (1985, p. 253), and a fragment of proto-Corinthian vase («BCH», 1959, p. 673) also date.

[60] Snodgrass 1980, pp. 52-58, pp. 62-64; Morgan 1990, pp. 3-4; de Polignac 1994, p. 11.

for the first time bronze tripods[61] and cauldrons[62], mostly preserved in fragments so that their numbers are unknowable, are attested at Dodona. Pieces of tripod legs of different sizes and flat circular handles from the upper part of tripods and cauldrons date between the 8th and the first half of the 7th centuries BC[63]. Some of the decorations on the tripod legs, spirals and wave motifs, recall decorative patterns of tripods found in Olympia[64] and Delphi[65]. Tripods and cauldrons, as described also in the Homeric epics[66], are widely considered as symbols of wealth, a signal of an abundance of possessions and prestige. When found in sanctuaries, they are interpreted as precious gifts donated by high-ranking members of society[67], as well as a sign that ritual banquets occurred there. Cultic devotion in the Iron Age is (often) manifested not only through the dedication of rich offerings, but rather via forms of ritualized commensality, as demonstrated at Olympia, Isthmia and Kalapodi: after the sacrifice to the god, the meal was shared between the participants at

61 Athens, NM 419 (Dieterle 2007, F 385); Athens, NM 420-430 (Carapanos 1878, pp. 92-93 no. 7, pl. XLIX, 16-18; Dieterle 2007, F 386-389); Ioannina, AM 74 (Dieterle 2007, F 390); Ioannina, AM 123- 127 (*EpeirChron* 1935, no. 52/4, pl. 23a 1-7; Dieterle 2007, F 391); Athens, NM 16857 (Dieterle 2007, F 392); Ioannina, AM 645 (Dieterle 2007, F 393); Ioannina, AM 911 (Dieterle 2007, F 394); Ioannina, AM 1284 (Dieterle 2007, F 395); Ioannina, AM 1415 (Dieterle 2007, F 396); Ioannina, AM 2520 (Dieterle 2007, F 397); Ioannina, AM 2939, 2984 (Dieterle 2007, F 398); Ioannina, AM 3051 (Dieterle 2007, F 399); Paris, LO MNB 2877 (Dieterle 2007, F 400); Paris, LO MNC 1237 (Dieterle 2007, F 401); Ioannina, AM 1689 (*PAE* 1967, p. 45, pl. 32a; Dieterle 2007, F 402).

62 Athens, NM 431 (Carapanos 1878, p. 93 no. 7, pl. XLIX, 21; Dieterle 2007, F 220); Athens, NM 329 (Carapanos 1878, p. 87 no. 12, pl. XLIII, 4; Dieterle 2007, F 221); Ioannina, AM 749 (Vokotopoulou 1973, p. 69; Dieterle 2007, F 222); Ioannina, AM 1551 (Dieterle 2007, F 223); Ioannina, AM 2688 (*PAE* 1929, p. 119, fig. 10.4; Dieterle 2007, F 224); Ioannina, AM 162 (*EpeirChron* 1935, p. 234, pl. 21b 25-26; Dieterle 2007, F 225).

63 Mass 1978, dating according to decorations; Prent 2005, pp. 377-383, for the problems of dating and manufacture.

64 Mass 1978, p. 79, p. 84 figs. 4a and 4b, 221, 223, pl. 48.201, 227; pl. 49, 203; pl. 50, 207; pl. 51, 209, 210, 211, 211a; pl. 54, 255-256.

65 Rolley 1977, pl. XXIX, 360, 361, 362, 365; pl. LI, 490.

66 Hom., *Il.* II, 337-347; XXI, 8-14; XXI, 42-62.

67 Finley 1979, pp. 61-98, pp. 120-122; Rolley 1986, p. 61; van Wees 1992, pp. 72-73, pp. 103-105; Prent 2005, pp. 354-366, pp. 377-383.

the sacrifice. Tripods and cauldrons point towards this idea of consuming and sharing a ritual meal after the sacrifice[68].

The seasonal mobility of the inhabitants of this area, i.e. the transhumant shepherds, not tied to a specific territory nor to a large organized community, should have contributed to the elaboration of a self-consciousness based on the collective participation to rites performed at a focal point within the communication network of the area. The act of sacrificing and collectively consuming the meal helped in circumscribing and socially defining a group, which distinguished itself from all those not taking part in the ritual banquet.

Besides these large bronzes, four naked anthropomorphic figurines were also found: roughly cast with a raised arm and three belts around their waists, they probably represent a warrior or a warrior-god[69]. They date to the first half of the 8th century BC. Very similar objects of the Proto-Geometric period are found in Olympia and Delphi[70]. These naked male figurines too are interpreted either as gods holding weapons or as warriors[71]. Beyond the inherent value of such offerings cast in solid bronze, patently showing the wealth of their dedicators, their iconography – weapons and male sexual attributes – also suggests the gender of the first devotees.

Similarly regarded as offerings of wealthy people are the figurines of horses found at Dodona[72]. The general popularity of horse imagery in the Geometric Greek world has been related to the rise in the importance of an aristocracy, which held a privileged position with respect to the possession of horses[73]. These animals, which were very expensive to keep, became in their representations a symbol of the socio-economic status of

68 Morgan 1996, p. 55.

69 Ioannina, AM 4905; Ioannina, AM 2541; Athens, NM 34 (Dieterle 2007, F 51-54).

70 Schiering 1969, figs. 9-10; Morgan 1990, p. 34.

71 Byrne 1991, *passim*.

72 *PAE* 1958, p. 105, pl. 83b; «BCH», 1959, p. 673; Vokotopoulou 1973, pp. 55-56; Heilmeyer 1979, p. 189 n. 244.

73 Benson 1970, p. 139; Snodgrass 1971, pp. 414-415; Zimmerman 1989, pp. 2-4, pp. 322-325; Prent 2005, pp. 392-397.

the aristocratic *élites* dedicating them, even when the figurines were small in size.

Thus we can conclude with some confidence that in the Early Iron Age the main visitors to the site for cultic purposes were local *élites*, since the archaeological evidence does not seem to point to the popularity of the shrine stretching beyond the immediate locality and its neighbouring areas.

Chapter 2

Euboeans and Dodona

Euboeans at Dodona

Until the mid-7th century BC, the catchment area of the shrine of Dodona was merely local[1]: those visiting the Epirote sanctuary were not from communities far beyond the natural boundaries of the region, namely the Pindos mountain chain and the Adriatic and Ionian coastlines.

This all changed in the second half of the 7th century BC[2], when the fame of the oracular sanctuary crossed the Pindos Mountains, thanks to the Hyperboreans' *theoria* to Delos. This ritual established close ties between the Dodonaean shrine and its officials – respectively the place of departure and the bearers of the Hyperborean offerings up to the Maliac Gulf – and the Euboeans, now considered the real promoters of the spectacular

[1] For the local catchment area of the oracular shrine of Dodona before the 7th century BC see pp. 40-44.

[2] The story of Croesus' consultation of Dodona cannot be considered as evidence of an early expansion of the catchment area of the shrine. Herodotus (I, 46, 2-47) reports the famous test in which Zeus at Dodona is probed along with other six prophetic gods, i.e. Apollo at Delphi, Apollo at Abae, Branchidae at Miletos, Amphiaraus at Thebes, Trophonius at Lebadeia, Zeus Ammon at Siwah, before the oracle that got it right is queried on the Lydian campaign against Persia. The implications of such an account, which would have guaranteed the international prestige of the oracular shrine of Dodona as early as the second quarter of the 6th century BC, are lessened by the historical unreliability of Croesus' oracular test, unanimously dismissed by modern scholarship (Papazarkadas 2014, pp. 233-247; Thonemann 2016, pp. 152-158). The account stresses, indeed, the superiority of the oracle of Delphi over other shrines (Defradas 1954, pp. 208-228; Parke 1967, pp. 200-202; Fontenrose 1978, pp. 111-113). On the "barbarian" approach to Greek oracles, recently Gazzano 2014.

procession[3]. Analysis of the rite and its implications, in terms of the oracle's renown and prestige beyond Epirote regional borders, is necessarily tied into an appraisal of Euboea's ancient trade network between the mid-11th and the early 7th centuries BC. In this respect, the alleged presence of Euboean foundations in the lower Adriatic Basin and Ionian Sea should be also taken into account in order to assess the modalities through which the Euboeans came into contact with Dodona.

Set in Herodotus' long account on Scythia[4], the *excursus* on the Hyperborean gifts[5] is indeed crucial to dating the extension of the reputation of Dodona beyond its local area[6]. As cogently argued by Moscati Castelnuovo, the *theoria* of the Hyperboreans from the sanctuary of Zeus in Epirus to that of Apollo in the core of the Cyclades is a ritual involving the Euboeans, who were «motore e fulcro della celebrazione»[7]. The legendary Hyperboreans[8] have a strong link with reality: their gifts were effectively registered as donations ἐξ Ὑπερβορέων, in two 4th-century-BC records from Delos[9]. According to Herodotus, Hyperborean offerings, wrapped in wheat-straw and directed to Delos, were from time to time given first to the Scythians, who «passed them on to their neighbours upon the West, who continued to pass them until at last they reached the Adriatic»[10]. From there they went southwards, where the Dodonaeans were the first of the Greeks to receive them and were in charge of them reaching the Maliac Gulf and, then, Euboea[11]. There-

[3] Moscati Castelnuovo 2005.

[4] Hdt. IV, 5-83.

[5] Hdt. IV, 32-35.

[6] Moscati Castelnuovo 2005, p. 147.

[7] Moscati Castelnuovo 2005, p. 145.

[8] Daebritz 1914, coll. 258-279.

[9] *IDélos* 100, l. 49 dated to 372/1 BC and *IDélos* 104 (3), l. 8 dated, on palaeographic grounds, to the mid-4th century BC. Perhaps also *IDélos* 98, ll. 68-69. Hyperborean offerings are also recorded in the accounts of the Delian Amphyctiony (*IG* II^2 1636, l. 8).

[10] Hdt. IV, 32-35. Only slightly different is Callimac., *Hymn.* IV, 283-299. The Hyperborean itinerary in Pausanias will be discussed later. Herodotus mentions the Delians as his source (Hdt. IV, 33, 1).

[11] Hdt. IV, 33: ἐνθεῦτεν δὲ πρὸς μεσαμβρίην προπεμπόμενα πρώτους Δωδωναίους Ἑλλήνων δέκεσθαι. The role of the sanctuary is underestimanted by Castiglioni 2013, pp. 390-392.

upon, the offerings passed from *polis* to *polis* down to Karystos, the extreme southern point of the island. The inhabitants of Karystos, in turn, delivered the gifts to the Tenians, who, finally, had the privilege of handing them to Delos[12].

Moscati Castelnuovo has pointed out some key elements in order to historicize this ritual. *In primis*, she highlighted the sharp distinction between a first vague phase of the Hyperborean itinerary, involving Scythians and some undetermined neighbouring peoples, and a second accurate account of the historically attested communities – rather like a relay – involved in the delivery. The sanctuary of Dodona in Epirus represents a sort of demarcation line between the known and unknown worlds, between the Greeks and the others. With the arrival of the gifts at Dodona, the geography of the Hyperborean journey becomes more precise: Dodona works as a gateway into Greekness, marking «il passaggio da un'alterità immaginaria a un'al-

[12] Hdt. IV, 32-33: Ὑπερβορέων δὲ πέρι ἀνθρώπων οὔτε τι Σκύθαι λέγουσι οὐδὲν οὔτε τινὲς ἄλλοι τῶν ταύτῃ οἰκημένων, εἰ μὴ ἄρα Ἰσσηδόνες· ὡς δ' ἐγὼ δοκέω, οὐδ' οὗτοι λέγουσι οὐδέν· ἔλεγον γὰρ ἂν καὶ Σκύθαι, ὡς περὶ τῶν μουνοφθάλμων λέγουσι. Ἀλλ' Ἡσιόδῳ μέν ἐστι περὶ Ὑπερβορέων εἰρημένα, ἔστι δὲ καὶ Ὁμήρῳ ἐν Ἐπιγόνοισι, εἰ δὴ τῷ ἐόντι γε Ὁμηρος ταῦτα τὰ ἔπεα ἐποίησε. Πολλῷ δέ τι πλεῖστα περὶ αὐτῶν Δήλιοι λέγουσι, φάμενοι ἱρὰ ἐνδεδεμένα ἐν καλάμῃ πυρῶν ἐξ Ὑπερβορέων φερόμενα ἀπικνέεσθαι ἐς Σκύθας, ἀπὸ δὲ Σκυθέων ἤδη δεκομένους αἰεὶ τοὺς πλησιοχώρους ἑκάστους κομίζειν αὐτὰ τὸ πρὸς ἑσπέρης ἑκαστάτω ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀδρίην, ἐνθεῦτεν δὲ πρὸς μεσαμβρίην προπεμπόμενα πρώτους Δωδωναίους Ἑλλήνων δέκεσθαι, ἀπὸ δὲ τούτων καταβαίνειν ἐπὶ τὸν Μηλιέα κόλπον καὶ διαπορεύεσθαι ἐς Εὔβοιαν, πόλιν τε ἐς πόλιν πέμπειν μέχρι Καρύστου, τὸ δ' ἀπὸ ταύτης ἐκλείπειν Ἄνδρον· Καρυστίους γὰρ εἶναι τοὺς κομίζοντας ἐς Τῆνον, Τηνίους δὲ ἐς Δῆλον – «Concerning the Hyperborean people, neither the Scythians nor any other inhabitants of these lands tell us anything, except perhaps the Issedones. And, I think, even they say nothing; for if they did, then the Scythians, too, would have told, just as they tell of the one-eyed men. But Hesiod speaks of Hyperboreans, and Homer too in his poem *The Heroes' Sons*, if that is truly the work of Homer. But the Delians say much more about them than any others do. They say that offerings wrapped in straw are brought from the Hyperboreans to Scythia; when these have passed Scythia, each nation in turn receives them from its neighbors until they are carried to the Adriatic sea, which is the most westerly limit of their journey; from there, they are brought on to the south, the people of Dodona being the first Greeks to receive them. From Dodona they come down to the Melian gulf, and are carried across to Euboea, and one city sends them on to another until they come to Carystos; after this, Andros is left out of their journey, for Carystians carry them to Tenos, and Tenians to Delos» (transl. A.D. Godley).

terità reale»[13]. What matters, as Moscati Castelnuovo argues, is the mention of the communities actively associated or intentionally kept out from the crucial steps of the relay procession, both the first bearers, i.e. the Dodonaeans, the Euboeans, the inhabitants of Tenos, as well as the outcasts, i.e. the inhabitants of Andros. Considering both the peoples involved and those excluded is important not only for assessing the chronology of the rite, which likely had the end of the Lelantine war as the *terminus post quem*[14], but also for understanding the significance of the ritual. Notably not a single Euboean community is excluded from the rite, but all of them cooperated in participating in the relay, and none of them prevailed over the other, but left the decisive prerogative of the ultimate delivery to a loyal external ally[15]. The *theoria* worked, in Moscati Castelnuovo's words, as a «moment of pan-Euboean communal aggregation» after the end of the controversies between Eretria and Chalkis in the mid-7th century BC. The ritual endorses mutual recognition of all the parties involved: the Dodonaeans, paying their respect to the Euboeans, leading the whole rite, obtained in return a higher and wider interregional visibility; the sanctuary of Dodona, namely the real starting point of the procession, established a tie both with the Euboeans and the sanctuary of Delos, the final goal for the gifts; the Tenians were accorded by the Euboeans with the honour of being the last link in the chain – a fact which acquires even more significance because of the explicit mention of the exclusion of Andros.

A further element, which belongs to the practical aspect of the delivery of the Hyperborean gifts, should be considered: the route followed by the offerings from Scythia to the Adriatic in an East-West direction, and then back from Dodona to the Maliac Gulf in a West-East direction. For the bulk of their journey the Hyperborean gifts followed an overland route in

[13] Moscati Castelnuovo 2005, p. 142.

[14] Because of the peaceful cooperation of all the Euboean communities; for the exclusion of Andros, in stark contrast with Chalkis in the 7th century BC Moscati Castelnuovo 2005, pp. 144-147.

[15] The Tenians are awarded such a privilege because of their loyalty towards the Euboeans (Moscati Castelnuovo 2007, pp. 144-145 and p. 149).

northern and central Greece, a pathway which might be linked with the trans-regional contacts between Epirus and the regions beyond the Pindos chain up to the Aegean Sea[16].

Thus, once it has been established that the Hyperboreans/Euboeans were the first extra-regional Greeks to be in touch with the shrine of Dodona in the second half of the 7th century BC, it should be asked how did the Euboeans first make contact with the oracular shrine. Was it via settlements in Corcyra and on the Epirote coast or via trans-regional overland paths and through Thessaly?

Euboean Settlements in Epirus?

From the 10th century BC onwards the Euboeans, ever in search of metals, established an intense network of contacts all around the Mediterranean Basin. At first they oriented themselves towards the Aegean Sea and the Middle East, but from the 9th century onwards, they looked westwards[17]. As the Ionian Islands and the Epirote coast are conveniently located on the way to South Italy, they would have represented, to all appearances, the easiest and most natural path through which the Euboeans might have made contact with Dodona. Yet evidence recording Euboean settlements there before the arrival of the Corinthians is controversial.

Literary sources testify to an Euboean presence in Corcyra dating earlier than the Corinthian colonization in c. 733 BC and along the Illyrian-Epirote coast. Plutarch[18] writes that «men

16 Already Beaumont 1936, pp. 198-201.

17 The bibliography on the Euboeans in the Mediterranean is vast (Bakhuizen 1976; d'Agostino, Bats 1998; Mercuri 2004; Ridgway 2004; Descœudres 2006-2007; Lane Fox 2008, part. pp. 124-130).

18 Plut., *Mor.* 293A-B (= *Quaest. Gr.* 11): "Τίνες οἱ ἀποσφενδόνητοι;" Κέρκυραν τὴν νῆσον Ἐρετριεῖς κατῴκουν· Χαρικράτους δὲ πλεύσαντος ἐκ Κορίνθου μετὰ δυνάμεως καὶ τῷ πολέμῳ κρατοῦντος ἐμβάντες εἰς τὰς ναῦς οἱ Ἐρετριεῖς ἀπέπλευσαν οἴκαδε. προαισθόμενοι δ' οἱ πολῖται τῆς χώρας εἶργον αὐτοὺς καὶ ἀποβαίνειν ἐκώλυον σφενδονῶντες. μὴ δυνάμενοι δὲ μήτε πεῖσαι μήτε βιάσασθαι πολλοὺς καὶ ἀπαραιτήτους ὄντας ἐπὶ Θρᾴκης ἔπλευσαν καὶ κατασχόντες χωρίον, ἐν ᾧ πρότερον οἰκῆσαι Μέθωνα τὸν Ὀρφέως πρόγονον ἱστοροῦσι, τὴν μὲν πόλιν ὠνόμασαν Μεθώνην, ὑπὸ δὲ τῶν προσοίκων 'ἀποσφενδόνητοι'

from Eretria used to inhabit the island of Corcyra» and were expelled by Charicrates[19] of Corinth and, once they had sailed back home to Euboea, they were chased from there as well, to end up in Methone on the coast of Pieria in Macedonia[20].

There is a similar story in Lycophron[21], if the mention of Othronos in his verses indicates, as it seems, the tiny island of Othonoi, North-West of Corcyra[22]. The poet sets there the

προσωνομάσθησαν – «Who are the "Men repulsed by slings"? Men from Eretria used to inhabit the island of Corcyra. But Charicrates sailed thither from Corinth with an army and defeated them in war; so the Eretrians embarked in their ships and sailed back home. Their fellow-citizens, however, having learned of the matter before their arrival, barred their return to the country and prevented them from disembarking by showering upon them missiles from slings. Since the exiles were unable either to persuade or to overcome their fellow-citizens, who were numerous and inexorable, they sailed to Thrace and occupied a territory in which, according to tradition, Methon, the ancestor of Orpheus, had formerly lived. So the Eretrians named their city Methonê, but they were also named by their neighbours the *Men repulsed by slings*» (transl. F. Cole Babbitt). Also Halliday 1926; Halliday 1928, pp. 63-65. On the Corinthian foundation of Corcyra Strabo VI, 2, 4, C 269 and Euseb. – Ieronym 91b (Helm[3]) = 85 (Schöne); on the controversial dating (733 or 706 BC) of the foundation van Compernolle 1953, p. 189 and Graham 1964, pp. 218-223.

19 Here the name of the Corinthian *oikistes* of Corcyra is Charicrates and not Chersicrates, descendent of the Bacchiadae (Timaeus *FGrHist* 566 F 80; Strabo VI, 2, 4, C 269). Strabo mentions Chersicrates expelling the Liburnians, and not the Eretrians, from Corcyra (ἐκεῖνον μὲν οὖν ἐκβαλόντα Λιβυρνοὺς κατέχοντας οἰκίσαι τὴν νῆσον).

20 On Euboean colonization in the area of the Thermaic Gulf, Halliday 1928, pp. 64-65; Graham 1964, pp. 220-223; Bakhuizen 1976, p. 19; Snodgrass 1994; Hammond 1998; Mele 1998; Soueref 1998; Kotsonas 2012.

21 Lycophr., *Alex*. 1034-1046: Παπποκτόνος δ' Ὀθρωνὸν οἰκήσει λύκος / τηλοῦ πατρῷα ῥεῖθρα Κοσκύνθου ποθῶν. / ὃς ἐν θαλάσσῃ χοιράδων βεβὼς ἔπι / ῥήτρας πολίταις τὰς στρατοπλώτους ἐρεῖ. / χέρσου πατρῴας οὐ γὰρ ἂν φονῆ ποσὶ / ψαῦσαι, μέγαν πλειῶνα μὴ πεφευγότα,/ δίκης ἐάσει τάρροθος Τελφουσία / Λάδωνος ἀμφὶ ῥεῖθρα ναίουσα σκύλαξ. / ὅθεν πεφευγὼς ἑρπετῶν δεινὴν μάχην / δρακοντομόρφων εἰς Ἀμαντίαν πόλιν / πλώσει. πέλας δὲ γῆς Ἀτιντάνων μολὼν / Πράκτιν παρ' αὐτὴν αἰπὺ νάσσεται λέπας,/ τοῦ Χαονίτου νᾶμα Πολυάνθου δρέπων – «The wolf, the killer of his grandfather, shall dwell at Othronos, / yearning for the distant ancestral streams of Koskynthos. / Standing on a rock by the sea, / he will shout to his citizens the orders for sailing. / For because he is a murderer, for him to set foot on the dry land / of his ancestors before he has been in exile for a great period / will be forbidden by Telphousia who supports justice, / the bitch who lives round the streams of Ladon. / From there, fleeing from a terrible battle / with the creeping serpent-like enemies, he shall sail to the city / of Amantia. Going near to the land of the Atintanians, / he settles on a rock at Praktis,/ enjoying the waters of Chaonian Polyanthes» (transl. S. Hornblower).

22 In this case the key to decoding Lycophron's *griphos*, according to which a tiny and insignificant islet stands for – metonymically – the biggest island, is the

account of wandering Euboeans, headed by Elephenor, after the Trojan war[23]: the Euboeans, blown off course when returning from Troy and driven away from home, settled first in Othronos, and later, «after a terrible battle with dragon-like snakes»[24], reached Amantia on the coast of Epirus.

Lycophron and Plutarch, agree in indicating who expelled the Euboeans from Corcyra/Othronos: the Corinthians. If the mention in Plutarch is explicit – i.e. those led by Charicrates from Corinth, Lycophron's language is, as usual, consistently cryptic in that he reports a battle between the Euboeans-Abantes of Elephenor and «dragon-like snakes»[25]. According to Beaumont, these dragon/snake enemies recall the myth of Cadmus and Harmonia, both of whom, eventually, mutated into snakes before arriving in north-western Greece, where they were eventually buried[26]. The Corinthians are considered as responsible for the diffusion of the myth in Illyria and Epirus[27]. The main argument in support of this hypothesis is a verse in Nicander's *Theriaka*[28] about the diffusion of the iris plant between the Naron and the Deilon[29], that is to say in the area where Cadmus

proximity between Othronos/Othonoi and Corcyra. As for Lycophron's mannerism and complicated system of *kenningar*, replacing conventional geographical names, divinities, heroes and natural elements with complicated periphrases, metonymies and allusions, cf. Ciani 1973, esp. pp. 145-147. On the identification of the island of Othronos other less forceful possibilities are suggested by Hornblower 2015, pp. 375-379.

[23] Lycohron's account diverges on this point from the Homeric tradition. In the *Iliad* Elephenor was killed by Agenor in Troy (Hom., *Il.* IV, 463-472).

[24] Hornblower 2015, p. 381 translates ἑρπετῶν δρακοντομόρφων as «of the creeping serpent-like enemies», losing the double reference to snakes and dragons.

[25] For the identification of the serpent-like dragons of Lycophron with the Corinthians, Antonelli 2000, pp. 63-84, pp. 127-128. Ciaceri 1901, p. 292 believes the snakes simply allude to the Erinyes, which pursued Elephenor after having killed his grandfather Abas. Indeed in Greek literature and art they are described and depicted as having snakes for hair (Aesch., *Choeph.* 1049; Eurip., *Iphig. Taur.* 287; Eurip., *Or.* 256; Ovid., *Met.* IV, 483 and 491; Paus. I, 28, 6; Delev 1986, III, 1, pp. 825-843).

[26] The myth of Cadmus and Harmonia is rather popular in north-western Greece and Illyria, (Beaumont 1936, pp. 94-198; Castiglioni 2010).

[27] Beaumont 1936; Antonelli 1994, pp. 17-19 and pp. 21-23; Antonelli 2000, pp. 63-80.

[28] Nicand., *Ther.* 607.

[29] For *iris illyrica* as a luxury product in ancient cosmetics see Plin., *N.H.* XXI, 40-42; Ovid., *Medic.* 74; Faure 1987; Paszthory 1992; Dayagi-Mendels 1993;

and Harmonia were allegedly buried. The fact that, according to Beaumont, the iris rhizome was one of the major products bartered by the Corinthians in north-western Greece and Illyria hints to a possible connection between Corinthian interest and trade in Illyria and Epirus and the contemporary spread of the legend of Cadmus and Harmonia. The Corinthians might have fused this myth with similar local traditions revolving around serpent-like ancestors[30] – indeed, snakes are often represented in material culture in north-west Greece[31].

Pausanias writes of an Euboean foundation on the Illyrian-Epirote coast, more precisely in the region called Abantis[32]. In describing the monument of the Apolloniates in Olympia, which was built as a dedication of spoils from the destruction of the defeated Thronion in Thesprotia[33], he provides details on the foundation of the Epirote coast: σκεδασθεισῶν γὰρ Ἑλλησιν, ὡς ἐκομίζοντο ἐξ Ἰλίου, τῶν νεῶν, Λοκροί τε ἐκ Θρονίου τῆς ἐπὶ Βοαγρίῳ ποταμῷ καὶ Ἄβαντες ἀπὸ Εὐβοίας ναυσὶν ὀκτὼ συναμφότεροι πρὸς τὰ ὄρη κατηνέχθησαν τὰ Κεραύνια. οἰκήσαντες δὲ ἐνταῦθα καὶ πόλιν οἰκίσαντες Θρόνιον, καὶ τῆς γῆς ἐφ' ὅσον ἐνέμοντο Ἀβαντίδος ὄνομα ἀπὸ κοινοῦ λόγου θέμενοι – «when the Greek fleet was scattered on the voyage from Troy, Locrians from Thronion[34], a city on the river Boagrios, and Abantes from Euboea, with eight ships

Bodiou, Frère, Mehl 2008; Verbanck, Piérard, Massar 2008; Squillace 2010, pp. 75-233; Carannante, D'Acunto 2012; D'Acunto 2012; Frère, Garnier 2012; Squillace 2014; Squillace 2015; for Corinthian involvement in the iris trade, especially in north-western Greece, Beaumont 1936, pp. 183-185; Nikolanci 1980; Wilkes 1992, p. 221; Rossignoli 2000; D'Acunto 2012, esp. pp. 205-215; Frère, Garnier 2012, esp. pp. 61-64.

30 Beaumont 1936, pp. 183-185. Myths of serpent-like progenitors are rather common in ancient cultures. Greek examples include Cecrops in Athens and the *Spartoi* in Thebes, not to mention all the other snake-shaped monsters and gods, Fontenrose 1959; Sancassano 1997, pp. 359-367; Visintin 1997; Ogden 2013.

31 Olympias, the Molossian mother of Alexander the Great, was often associated with snakes, Plut., *Alex*. II-III; Cic., *De div*. II, 135; Iust. XI, 11, 3-6; Hammond 1967, p. 438; Carney 2006, p. 93, pp. 118-119; Castiglioni 2006.

32 Paus. V, 22, 3; Steph. Byz. s.v. Ἀβαντίς.

33 For current interpretations of the monument Cabanes 1999; Malkin 2001, pp. 193-194; Castiglioni 2003; Lamboley 2005; Antonetti 2007; Antonetti 2010; Piccinini 2011. As for a probable consultation of the inhabitants of Thronion at Dodona cf. DCV 1184B.

34 Not striking is the presence of Opuntian Locrians, culturally closed to the Euboeans at least between the 11th and 7th centuries BC (Lemos 1998).

altogether, were driven on the Ceraunian Mountains. Settling here and founding the city of Thronion, by common agreement they gave the name of Abantis[35] to the land as far as they occupied it»[36]. Another Euboean settlement in the area is mentioned by Pseudo-Scymnus, who refers to the foundation of Orikos by Euboeans, caught by a storm, on their way home from Troy[37].

Besides these literary accounts, it should be mentioned that several Euboean toponyms, such as Euboea[38], Hellopia[39], Abantis[40] and Makris[41], recur in the Epirote area.

Traditions recalling a Euboean presence in Corcyra are, however, not supported by the archaeological record. So far, apart from evidence limited to a few items found in Ithaca and Corcyra[42], no find testifies to any (stable) presence of Euboeans

35 The king Abas, eponymous of the Abantes, was killed by his nephew Elephenor (Lycophr., *Alex*. 1034-1036) and Abantes is another name for the Euboeans (Hom., *Il*. II, 536-537). As for the Abantes of Euboea and their saga, Biffi 1985-1986; Fourgous 1987; Breglia 2013, pp. 35-36.

36 Paus. V, 22, 3-4 (*IApollonia* T 303).

37 Ps.-Scymn. 441-443: Ἑλληνὶς Ὡρικός τε παράλιος πόλις· ἐξ Ἰλίου γὰρ ἐπανάγοντες Εὐβοεῖς κτίζουσι, κατενεχθέντες ὑπὸ τῶν πνευμάτων. The site of Orikos has been identified on a small promontory in the southern part of the Gulf of Valona, an area of strategic importance now belonging to the Albanian military navy (*Inventory*, p. 347).

38 Strabo X, 1, 15, C 449.

39 Strabo VII, 7, 10, C 328. Strabo mentions as his sources Hesiod and Philochorus.

40 Paus. V, 22, 3-4.

41 Apoll. Rhod. IV, 990, 1130-1135; schol. Apoll. Rhod. IV, 1174-1175b; Strabo X, 1, 2, C 444.

42 Among the very few pieces of material evidence relating, controversially, to Euboea there are the Euboean alphabet used in Ithaca, some potsherds found in Ithaca and Corcyra and an image on a *stater* from Corcyra, whose iconography reminds similar coins issued in Karystos. Concerning the alphabet in Ithaca, it was Euboean (cf. for instance a guest-friendship *xenia* inscription with a Chalkidian *lambda* on a wine-jug discovered in Ithaca's main sanctuary of Aetos, Robb 1994, pp. 49-52, *LSAG*^{2}, p. 230). The Euboean ceramics are found in Corcyra and Ithaca, see Coldstream 1977, p. 188 Morgan, Arafat 1995, p. 27; Morgan 1998; Bakhuizen 1976, p. 19, who believe they were of local production dating to the 7th century BC. Kalliopolitis 1982, pp. 74-75 tentatively identifies potsherds from three Eretrian vessels in a deposit at Palaiopolis in Corcyra, which Morgan 1995 claims are likely to belong to the early 7th century and may be locally produced. Another element that some have claimed may shed light upon the historicity of an Euboean settlement in Corcyra is the image on a coin issued first in the late 6th century BC, perhaps c. 525 BC. It features a cow suckling a calf on the obverse and two oblong and rectangular punch marks containing elongated stellate patterns within each sinking on the reverse. The use of this specific bovine motif on the earliest *stater* has attracted the attention

in Epirus, on the Ionian Islands, or in the entire Adriatic Basin[43]. This discrepancy has lead to a divide between scholars: while some basically trust the literary evidence and maintain the existence of Euboean colonies[44], others, mainly archaeologists, are against this assumption[45]. In this controversy we could settle on a middle ground.

Given the ancient maritime routes and navigation systems, which preferred cabotage rather than open-sea sailing[46], it is not difficult to believe that the area in between the Ionian Islands and the Strait of Otranto was crossed by Euboean ships going westwards[47], as Euboean potsherds found in Salento indeed prove[48]. However, it is one thing to claim the presence of Euboean traders and sailors in the lower part of the Adriatic and Ionian sea[49], and another to state, on the basis of the limited literary evidence, the foundation of Euboean colonies in Corcyra, even if short-lived, and on the Epirote coasts before the arrival of the Corinthians[50]. More likely, the Euboeans in Epirus and the Ionian Islands were not stable colonizers, but transient seafarers with no interests in establishing firm trade-network settlements there.

The area, namely the islands, was of high strategic importance as a bridge and point of support for long-distance navi-

of historians and numismatists wishing to connect Corcyra to Euboea, for the *polis* of Karystos minted a *stater* of a similar type in about this same period. This argument was pressed hardest by Cary and accepted by Kraay (Cary 1926, pp. 148-149; Kraay 1976, p. 128), but the cow-sucking-calf motif has long been recognised as an ancient one and its use was widespread (Head 1911, pp. 325-326; Fried 1982, pp. 3-4).

[43] Morgan 1998.

[44] Beaumont 1936; Graham 1964, pp. 221-223; Lepore 1962, pp. 128-129; Braccesi 1977[2], p. 98; Biffi 1985-1986; Malkin 1998a; Malkin 1998b; Antonelli 2000, pp. 39-57; Lamboley 2005, pp. 15-18.

[45] Morgan, Arafat 1995, p. 27; Morgan 1998; Bakhuizen 1976, p. 19.

[46] For ancient maritime route and sailing, primarily Arnaud 2005.

[47] These trade routes followed the same paths used during the Mycenaean period (Sherrat, Sherrat 1993; Harding 1976; Harding 1984; Gaffery, Čače, Hayes, Kirigin, Leach, Vujnovič 2002; Tartaron 2013, *passim*).

[48] D'Andria 1985; Lane Fox 2008, p. 130, p. 212; Lamboley 1996, p. 60; Giangiulio 1996, p. 503; Malkin 2001, p. 188.

[49] As no material and literary evidence testify to the presence of Euboeans on either shore of the upper coasts of the Adriatic Sea, it is highly plausible that Euboeans never got beyond the Strait of Otranto.

[50] Malkin 1998b.

gation[51]. Moreover, because of the presence of minerals, metals (especially silver), bitumen, iris root for perfumes and amber from the North, Epirote coasts and Ionian islands were advantageous, if ephemeral, landing points, where all these goods converged, and temporary markets for the Euboeans might have installed[52].

The Euboean Route to Dodona

Despite the strong maritime character of Euboean expansion between the mid-11th and 7th centuries BC, Euboeans may or may not have reached Dodona's sanctuary by sea. They might have heard about it, if they ever traded with the locals, and it is possible that they did come by sea, but the eventuality that Euboeans arrived in Epirus by land should not be discarded *a priori*[53]. In this last case too there is a problem with the material evidence, which is lacking in north-western Greece[54], but it is not unlikely that the Euboeans reached Epirus and Dodona or got to know the shrine via Thessaly. Beside the Aegean, Euboean influence in central and northern Greece was particularly strong, so as to form from the mid-11th century BC what is nowadays called Euboean *koine*[55]. Euboean pottery has been found in Thessaly, Boeotia, Locris, and in other neighbouring regions, highlighting the fact that Euboean influence was not limited to the Aegean islands and coasts, but also penetrated inland into continental Greece. A narrow inlet of water separates Euboea

[51] Already Thuc. I, 36, 2; 37, 3. Also Malkin 1998a, pp. 2-7; Malkin 1998b, p. 68.

[52] Euboean trade in Epirus might have not involved the exchange of raw local materials with Euboean pottery, but rather with other products, such as oil and wine (Lane Fox 2008, p. 63).

[53] It is not unlikely that the Euboeans reached also Delphi by land (Dominguez Monedero 2014, p. 196; Morgan 2003, pp. 217-218). On Locris as an-east-to-west corridor, Fossey 1990, *passim*; Papakonstantinou, Zachos 2013; Sánchez-Moreno 2013a; Sánchez-Moreno 2013b.

[54] Whether this lack is due to the complete absence of evidence or to the state of present in-progress research is not possible to say. Moreover, trade in consumables, such as cereals, wine and oil, often do not leave traces.

[55] Lemos 1998.

from north and central Greece, distinctive and shared Euboean characters exist in the material culture of Thessaly, Boeotia, Phocis, and East Locris, that is to say the regions bordering and culturally tied to Epirus. Not to mention the fact that these were the same areas crossed by the Hyperborean procession from Dodona to Euboea. As already argued, the Epirote borders were very permeable and, at any time, Epirote connections with Thessaly and Boeotia are to be found. Northern Greece sites and regions formed an intricate net of long-distance exchanges, which passed over regional borders[56].

In any case, whatever the exact path to Epirus and Dodona, i.e. if the Euboeans came from the East or the West, the outcome is not affected. A Euboean presence in the lower Adriatic and Ionian Seas as early as the 8th century BC is crucial to understanding the later development of the shrine. The Euboean interest in the shrine of Zeus Dodonaeus is strongly tied into the Corinthian concerns on the Illyrian-Epirote coast and contributed significantly to increasing the popularity and thriving nature of the sanctuary. In the 7th century BC, thanks to Euboean agency, Dodona emerged out of a strict regional context and passed onto a wider interregional stage.

A Corcyraean Perspective and the Re-Definition of the Corcyraean Peréa

With the lack of positive evidence testifying to stable Euboean settlements in the Ionian and lower Adriatic Seas areas, foundation accounts attesting to Euboeans in Corcyra (or Othonoi), Orikos, Amantia and Thronion[57] should be read not only in the light of the maritime passages of seafarers and traders on their way towards Magna Graecia and Sicily, but also in the wake of

[56] The land route to Molossia from the Aegean Sea was made, according to Agias of Troezene, by Neoptolemus on his way home from Troy (Procl., *Chrest*. p. 95, 296-300 (Severyns) = *Returns*, arg. pp. 154-157, 3-4 (West). Also Apollod., *Epit*. VI, 12).

[57] Also Locrians for Thronion (Paus. V, 22, 3-4). For the significance of Locrian and Euboean joint enterprises, recently Domínguez Monedero 2014.

the long-lasting conflicts between Corcyra and its mother city Corinth.

The likely ground for the creation of foundation stories of Euboeans in Corcyra and Epirus lies in the Homeric tradition, and more specifically in the ties between the inhabitants of Scheria and the island of Euboea. From the last third of the 7th century BC, that is to say after the Euboean expansion in the west Mediterranean, the Homeric island of Scheria was identified with Corcyra[58]. The *Odyssey* is indeed at the basis of the associations "Scheria~Corcyra" and "Phaeacians~Eretrians~Corcyraeans". More specifically, the Phaeacians of Alcinous, inhabiting Scheria, are said to be descendants of the Giants[59]: Alcinous' father Nausithous was the son of Poseidon and Periboea, the daughter of Eurymedon, king of the Giants. According to the *Odyssey*, Nausithous was forced to leave his native land, Hypereia, because of problems with the neighbouring Cyclops[60]. Since the Cyclops, as cogently argued by Mele, belong to the mythical and cultic tradition of Chalkis[61], Hypereia, the land inhabited both by Giants and Cyclops (i.e. the Phaeacians before reaching Scheria), should be identified with the island of Euboea. Thus, the equation "Giants~Phaeacians~Eretrians" is a consequence of the assimilation of the Cyclops, i.e. the opponents of the Giants, with the Chalkidians and the association of Hypereia with Euboea[62].

[58] According to West (2014, p. 43) the *Odyssey* was composed in the last third of the 7th century BC in the west Ionian area, i.e. either Attica or Euboea (West 2014, pp. 90-91). For the associations of Phaeacians and Euboea, see Valenza Mele, 1979, pp. 36-40; Heubeck, West, Hainsworth 1988, pp. 323-324, p. 334. Antonelli 2000, pp. 27-37, especially pp. 32-33 n. 37, thinks that the equation Scheria–Corcyra is already in Homer; he also links the inscriptions mentioning Phaiax in Euboea to the toponym Makridis of the peninsula in front of Corcyra, which is attested also as the name of Dionysus' nurse expelled from Euboea (Apoll. Rhod. IV, 1128-1141).

[59] Hom., *Od.* VI, 2-6; VII, 56-63, 206 (see Heubeck, West, Hainsworth 1988, pp. 323-324, p. 334); Alcaeus fr. 188 Page (= 441 Voigt); Acusilaus *FGrHist* 2 F 4 (= Apoll. Rhod. IV, 992); Thuc. I, 25, 4; Hellanicus *FGrHist* 4 F 77 (= Steph. Byz. s.v. Φαίαξ); Ps.-Scylax 22.

[60] Hom., *Od.* VI, 1-11.

[61] Mele 1981, particularly pp. 21-25, followed by Breglia 2013, p. 33.

[62] Schol. Eurip., *Or.* 965; Hesych. s.v. χαλκιδικὸς λειμών· οἱ μὲν τὴν Κυκλωπίαν κώμην. οἱ δὲ Κύκλωπι λίμνη. For a Geraistos as eponymous of the promontory near Karystos, Steph. Byz. s.v. Γεραιστός and Ταίναρος and Mele 1981, pp. 20-22. Giants

The antagonism between the Giants and the Cyclops was then transferred to the rivalry between the Eretrians and the Chalkidians, and, later, the assimilation came to the fore by involving the Corcyraeans, who found "new" ancestors in the Giants~Phaeacians~Eretrians, perhaps also by reason of Corinthian aid to the Chalkidians in the Lelantine war[63].

We can therefore argue that the foundation account(s) of the Euboeans, heroes and real colonisers, taking possession of the island of Corcyra (or Othonoi) and the adjacent Epirote coast, was devised before the mid-5th century BC[64], in contrast with the historical vulgate, according to which in c. 733 BC the Corinthians sent a colony to Corcyra. By telling a different story, which had footholds in the Homeric account and in the role of the island within the network of routes and first pioneering voyages westwards of the Greeks, the Corcyraeans meant to provide themselves with an alternative pedigree in order to detach themselves from the Corinthians. Such a different tradition was widespread and widely accepted in the mid-5th century BC, if not earlier[65], as Thucydides indicates[66], as does a fragment of the 5th century BC comic Hermippus of Athens, alluding to the Corcyraeans' «heart divided in two»[67].

The elaboration of new foundation legends answers the need to create "alternative" roots and forge a new community identity: «real kinship link could cement such claims, but with a little ingenuity even unconnected communities might be able to

and Cyclops are attested in Euboea and Sicily (schol. Hom., *Od*. VI, 4).

63 According to the ancient sources, in the Lelantine war the Eretrians were helped by the Megarians and Milesians; allies of the Chalkidians were the Samians, some Thessalians and the Corinthians [Hdt. V, 99; Plut., *Mor*. 293 A-B (= *Graec. Quaest*. 11) and 760E].

64 Thuc. I, 25, 4.

65 Apollonius Rhodius' reference to the Euboeans' migration to Epirus after the arrival of the Bacchiadae (Apoll. Rhod. IV, 1210-1216) seems to depend, at least in part, on Eumelus' *Korinthiaka*, dated to the mid-6th century BC (West 2002, p. 109). Howie 1989, p. 29 thinks that «the identification of the island of Corcyra with Homer's Scheria can be taken back as early as the end of the seventh century BC», thanks to Alcaeus fr. 188 Page (= 441 Voigt).

66 Thuc. I, 25, 4. Thucydides (III, 70, 4) also testifies to a well-established joint sanctuary of Alcinous and Zeus in Corcyra in the 5th century BC, see Hornblower 1991, p. 469; Mackie 1996, pp. 104-196; Malkin 1998b, pp. 101-102.

67 Hermippus fr. 63 (Kock).

get themselves in on a city's past if there was some moment when this seemed mutually advantageous to both parties»[68].

The elaboration of these alternative Corcyraean roots was probably conceived of in a time of profound differences between Corcyra and its motherland Corinth[69]. One such was the first quarter of the 6th century BC, in the final years of the Cypselidae' control over Corcyra[70].

Interesting too is that these foundation legends involved not only Corcyra, but also some of the *poleis* on the Illyrian-Epirote coast[71], as Amantia, Thronion and Orikos, which were situated a few kilometres south of Apollonia in an area that did not traditionally gravitate into the control of Corinth[72]. Although they shared with Corcyra the same Euboean origin, they are not normally considered to be under the direct control of Corcyra, that is to say in its *peréa* along the Epirote coast, stretching between the Lygia peninsula, in front of Lefkimos promontory, and the bay of Butrint[73]. However, these *poleis* are not simply united to Corcyra by the same Euboean origin, but in at least two cases foundation stories testify to "colonial" movement of Euboeans from Corcyra or Othonoi[74] to the coast, making the Euboean Corcyra their motherland. Therefore, it is reasonable to think that these *poleis* depended on or were under the influence of Corcyra at least from the 6th century BC onwards.

[68] Osborne 1998, esp. pp. 265-268; Hall 2008; the invention of tradition is a rather common process in ancient and modern societies, Hobsbawm 2002; Hall 2008; Calame 2011; Gehrke 1994; Gehrke 2001; Gehrke 2010; Giangiulio 2010, esp. pp. 19-43.

[69] Well attested are the long lasting problems between Corcyra and Corinth (Hdt. III, 49, 1; Thuc. I, 13, 4; 25, 4; 38). See Graham 1964, pp. 118-149; Intrieri 2002, pp. 47-53; Antonetti 2007, pp. 90-93; Antonetti 2009, p. 325; Piccinini 2011, p. 244 n. 65 with previous bibliography.

[70] Hdt. III, 52, 6.

[71] As for the problem of defining Epirote communities as *poleis* before the 4th century BC cf. *Inventory*, pp. 338-339.

[72] That it was an area of strategic importance is clear because of the war between Apollonia and Thronion (Paus. V, 22, 3-4).

[73] This implies that Corcyra's control and influence was limited to Corcyra's channel (Carusi 2011).

[74] Plut., *Mor*. 293A-B (= *Quaest. Gr*. 11); Lycophr., *Alex*. 1034-1046. The island of Othronoi is too tiny not to have been "swallowed up", not only metaphorically, by Corcyra.

During the mid-7th century BC, Corinth managed to control most of the territory south of Butrint by founding several strategic colonies, such as Anaktorion, Ambracia and Leukas[75]. In the North, the situation was not much different: the policy of Epidamnus and Apollonia, both joint colonies of Corcyra and Corinth, had fluctuating strategies. Of the two, Apollonia was the more neutral[76]. It is thus not difficult to believe that from the early 6th century BC onwards Corcyra tried, successfully, to take under its influence other minor centres along the Epirote coast, including in its *peréa poleis* such as Amantia, Orikos and Thronion, which were not far distant from the seaside. In this sense the joint question made by the inhabitants of Corcyra and those of Orikos to the gods of Dodona in the second half of the 4th century BC about their *polis'* welfare and harvest is significant[77]:

[θ]εός. ἐπικοινῶνται τοὶ Κορκυ-
ραῖοι καὶ τοὶ Ὠρίκιοι τῶι Διὶ τῶι Ναί-
ωι καὶ τᾶι Διώναι τίνι κα θεῶν ἢ ἡ-
ρώων θύοντες καὶ εὐχόμενοι τὰ-
ν πόλιν κάλλιστα οἰκεῦεγ καὶ ἀσφα- 5
λέστατα καὶ εὐκαρπία σφιν καὶ πο-
λυκαρπία τελέθοι καὶ κατόνασις παν-
τὸς τὠγαθοῦ {τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ} καρποῦ.

«God. The People of Corcyra and those of Orikos ask Zeus Naios and Dione to which god or hero they should sacrifice and pray to dwell in their city well and as safely as possible and so that excellence and abundance of crops may flourish for them and the enjoyment of every good crop».

[75] Strabo X, 2, 8, C 452.
[76] Piccinini 2011, p. 244.
[77] Lhôte 2006, no. 2.

Chapter 3

A Domino Effect. The Corinthians

In the Footsteps of the Euboeans

As has been rightly acknowledged, Corinthian presence in the Mediterranean, especially in the West, followed in the footsteps of the Euboean pioneering voyages[1]. The phenomenon is particularly evident in the Tyrrhenian and Sicilian colonies, *emporia* and ports of trade, where archaeologists have found Euboean pottery dating earlier than the first Corinthian items[2]. Corinthian exploration of north-western markets follows the same pattern. Their trade routes in the lower Adriatic and Ionian Seas, both in the Ionian islands and in coastal and inland Epirus, might have followed Euboean exploration voyages in the 8th century BC[3].

From c. 800 BC Corinthian trade activity concentrated in North-Western Greece because of trade in metal and iris roots (for the production of perfumes)[4]. Thus, before the foundation of Corcyra in c. 733 BC Corinthian pottery had already started

[1] Dunbabin 1948, pp. 10-17; Graham 1964, pp. 220-222; Salmon 1984, pp. 92-93; Giangiulio 1996, p. 503; Maddoli 1996, pp. 1008-1011.

[2] Donnellan 2016; for Syracuse, in particular Cordano 2006, pp. 466-467; De Angelis 2016, pp. 69-71, 159-160.

[3] By 700 BC Corinth had become the foremost commercial power of the ancient world, largely directing its major trade interests to the western Mediterranean, Epirus included (Coldstream 1977, pp. 167-188; Vokotopoulou 1982; Vokotopoulou 1986; Morgan 1988). In the last decades of the 7th century BC, Corinthian abilities in seafaring and trade were so renowned that Arion of Methymna, a famous lyre-player active in Corinth, Magna Graecia and Sicily, «trusting none more than the Corinthians», hired a Corinthian vessel to sail from Taras to Corinth (Hdt. I, 23-24).

[4] Damastion is the most famous silver-mining district (Strabo VII, 7, 8, C 326-327; Bissa 2009, p. 33); as for *iris illyrica* and Corinthian trade cf. pp. 51-52.

circulating in north-western Greece and the Ionian Islands, very likely first in Aetos and the Polis Cave in Ithaca, and shortly after in inland Epirus, namely at the sites of Arta and Vitsa[5]. In Arta, Corinthian imports date much earlier than the foundation of the Corinthian colony of Ambracia in c. 625 BC[6], i.e. to at least the beginning of the 8th century BC[7]. The case of Vitsa is even more instructive: the archaeological excavations at the two cemeteries[8] brought to light several Corinthian imports dating between c. 800 and 725 BC. Most of the 8th century BC burials contain weapons, pieces of jewellery and luxury items that indicate the wealthy status and prestige of the dead, thus confirming the conjecture that Corinthian vases found within the graves (concentrated in the period between the second and the third quarters of the 8th century) were perceived of as prestigious products[9]. The comparison between these finds and locally made artefacts, moreover, highlights the fact that Corinthian products exerted no influence upon the development of local Epirote styles. All these factors stress the function of Corinthian imports as a prestigious commodity either to be exchanged or to be offered to local aristocrats (and gods). The great majority of Corinthian shapes found in Vitsa point significantly to the use of the vessels for the consumption of wine[10].

In analysing the pattern of Corinthian imports in north-western Greece, especially in relation to Arta and Vitsa, Morgan has highlighted a down-the-line interchange deriving from a

5 Morgan 1988.

6 Fantasia 2017.

7 Vokotopoulou 1982 dates the first Corinthian ceramic imports to the end of the 9th century BC, but this is unlikely, since as Morgan (Morgan 1988, p. 314) rightly affirms, «prior to c. 800, Corinthian connections were concentrated on Medeon, in the area of the Gulf closest to Corinth itself».

8 The north and south cementeries of the settlement at Vitsa contain 177 burials, of which 173 have been dated: 81 to the 8th century BC, 25 to the 9th, 8 to the late 8th-early 7th centuries BC, 7 to the 7th, 10 to the 6th, 26 to the 5th and 15 to the 4th (Vokotopoulou 1982, p. 91; Vokotopoulou 1986).

9 The presence of a few metal vessels in the Vitsa burials indicate the Epirote preference for bronze imported objects as early as the 8th century BC. After 725 BC Corinthian imports ceased altogether (Vokotopoulou 1982, p. 91; Vokotopoulou 1986; Morgan 1988).

10 Vokotopoulou 1982; Vokotopoulou 1986; d'Agostino 2012, p. 283.

single source, very likely the island of Ithaca. Such a pattern of exchange to Arta-Vitsa also helps explain the presence of Corinthian vases as early as the late 8th century BC in Dodona, that is to say at the time of the foundation of Corcyra, as well as the development of the shrine itself, which lies on the road connecting Arta and Vitsa.

Between Facts and Artefacts: Corinthians and Dodona

Corinthian-made artefacts are among the most ancient non-Epirote objects found at Dodona. Their dating falls between the late 8th and the beginning of the 7th centuries BC.

This cluster of evidence consists of a ceramic *aryballos*[11] and bronze fragments decorating sympotic vessels[12], as well as helmets[13]. The objects pertaining to the category of sympotic-ware and weaponry certainly imply intrinsic socio-economic, but also political values, all connected to the aristocracy. But who were these aristocrats? Were they local or Corinthian *élites*? The problem, as always in such cases, concerns the identity of the ancient carriers and the dedicants, who did not necessarily correspond[14]. Corinthian products circulated in north-western Greece as early as the beginning of the 8th century BC: they could have been either bought or exchanged before reaching the sanctuary of Zeus Dodonaeus[15]. Corinthian artefacts at Dodona, thus, might relate either to acts of devotion by Corinthians themselves (perhaps the first traders passing by the sanctuary on their way to North-western markets), by the Corcyraeans or by local Epirote aristocrats, who donated to the gods prestigious commodities, which they had acquired either as trade goods or as part of a

11 *PAE* 1968, p. 58, fig. 41a. The possibility that the *aryballos* might relate to the Corinthian pursuit of iris rhizome for perfumes is not so remote (Chapter 2).

12 For example, *oinochoai* protomes very similar to those found in Vitsa (Athens, NM 339 and 341) and two plate ribbon handles (Berlin, AM Misc. 10588; Athens, NM 806).

13 Ex. British Museum 1904.1010.2.

14 I exclude the possibility of the presence of a Corinthian workshop operating at Dodona at such an early stage of development of the shrine.

15 *Supra*.

gift-exchanges[16]. However, the foundation of Corcyra and of the Corinthian-Corcyraean colonies in the north-west guarantees that Corinthians were in the area from the end of the 8th/ beginning of the 7th centuries BC onwards. Corinthian-made artefacts at Dodona are also attested in 6th century BC and beyond. The 6th century BC offerings also lie within the category of sympotic-ware (craters, *hydriae*, *oinochoai* and plates)[17]; some of these objects

[16] The exchanges between Greeks settled in the coastal colonies and non-Greeks inhabiting inland Epirus and Illyria were rather intense at any time. Testimony of this is the existence of a special office, the πωλήτης, attested in Epidamnus, who undertook all the dealings with the Illyrians and provided a special market for trade with them [Plut., *Mor*. 297F-298A (= *Quaest. Graec*. 29); Halliday 1928, pp. 137-139; Graham 2001, p. 52].

[17] Berlin, AM Misc. 10588 (Neugebauer 1951, pp. 51-53 no. 41, pl. 24; Charbonneaux 1958, p. 48; Franke, 1961, p. 27 fig. 3; Parke 1967, p. 276 no. 17; Schefold 1967, p. 206, pl. 151 a-b; Walter-Karydi 1981, p. 20 no. 16, fig. 26; Heilmeyer 1988, p. 89 no. 6; Dieterle 2007, p. 371 F 269); Athens, NM 806 (Carapanos 1878, pp. 88-89, pl. XLV, 2; Walter-Karydi 1981, no. 17; Dieterle 2007, p. 371 F 268); Athens, NM 27 (Carapanos 1878, p. 31 no. 6, pl. XI, 3 and 3 bis; Parke 1967, p. 275 no. 5; Wallenstein 1971, p. 145; Rolley 1986, fig. 49; Walter-Karydi 1981, p. 22, p. 24 fig. 18; Mattusch 1988, p. 113 fig 5.10; Dieterle 2007, p. 366 F 61); Athens, NM 36 (Carapanos 1878, p. 32 no. 11, p. 183, pl. XIII, 1; Parke 1967, p. 275 no. 4; Wallenstein 1971, p. 147 no. 27; Walter-Karydi 1981, p. 20 no. 11; Rolley 1982, p. 53, p. 62, p. 93, pl. XXXIX fig. 180; Dieterle 2007, F 328); Athens, NM 26 (Carapanos 1878, p. 32 no. 10 (*Apollon assis*), pl. 12.2; Walter-Karydi 1981, p. 20 no. 12; Rolley 1982, pp. 62-63, p. 89, p. 93, pl. XXXVII, figg. 172-175; Rolley 1986, p. 102 fig. 71; Dieterle 2007, p. 369 F 160); Athens, NM 16547 (*PAE* 1956, p. 154, pl. 58b; Parke 1967, p. 275 no. 6; Walter-Karydi 1981, p. 22, figg. 18, 21 and no. 10); London, BM, BM1954.10-18-1 (Parke 1967, p. 276 no. 14; Walter-Karydi 1981, pp. 30-31, 20, no. 20, Rolley 1986, p. 100 fig. 69; Dieterle 2007, p. 368 F 148); Athens, NM 28 (Carapanos 1878, p. 31 no. 3, pl. X, 2 and 2 bis; Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 188 no. 19; Dieterle 2007, p. 368 F 161); Ioannina, AM 4903 (*PAE* 1954, pp. 191-192, fig. 2-3; Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 189 no. 9, pl. 53c); Berlin, AM Misc 7976 (Wallestein 1971, p. 146 no. 28, pl. 20 VI/B 28; Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 159, p. 189 no. 1; Heilmeyer 1988, p. 55 no. 3; Dieterle 2007, p. 366 F 58); Athens, NM 22 (Carapanos 1878, p. 31 no. 1, pl. IX, 1 and 1 bis; Parke 1967, p. 275 no. 3; Wallenstein 1971, p. 156 no. 27; Rolley 1982, p. 93; Walter-Karydi 1981, p. 28, figs. 29-30, p. 20 no. 6; Dieterle 2007, p. 366 F 70); Athens, NM 64 (Carapanos 1878, p. 38 no. 6, pl. XX, 8; Rolley 1982, p. 93, pl. XLIII, fig. 200; Dieterle 2007, p. 369 F 185); Athens, NM 339 (Carapanos 1878, p. 88, pl. XLIV, 1 e 1 bis; Hill 1962, pp. 57-63, part. p. 54, p. 60, fig. 12; Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 20, p. 177 no. 7, fig. 17 a-c; Dieterle 2007, p. 370 F 228); Athens, NM 341 (Carapanos 1878, p. 88, pl. XLIV, 2 and 2 bis; Hill 1962, p. 57 no. 1, fig. XVI, 11; Wallenstein 1971, VI/B24, fig. XIX, 2; Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 177 no. 1, pl. XIV, a-b; Dieterle 2007, p. 370 F 226); Ioannina, AM 4917 (*PAE* 1952, pp. 288-289 no. 3, fig. 7; Gauer 1991, p. 81 n. 181; Dieterle 2007, p. 369 F 174); Athens, NM 340 (Vokotopoulou 1975, pp. 15-17, p. 177 no. 3, pl. XIV, g-d; Dieterle 2007, p. 370 F 228a); Ioannina, AM 4920 (*PAE*

are of significant size[18]. Such vases and their attachments, which decorate the rims, through their iconographic themes relate even more closely to the Greek *élite*. Riders, a banqueter, a *kouros*, a satyr are some examples of the iconographic types reminiscent of the well-defined socio-political stratum linked with the practice of symposia[19]. Even in this case, it is not possible to ascertain the provenance and the clients of Corinthian products: whether they were produced in Corinth, made in Corinthian colonies, or bought by other devotees on their way to Dodona. Despite these uncertainties, Corinthian contacts in the 6th century BC are indicated by a literary source.

1954, pp. 191-192, figs. 5-6; Hill 1962, p. 58 no. 5, pl. XVI; Dieterle 2007, p. 370 F 229); Athens, NM 360 (Carapanos 1878, p. 88; Vokotopoulou 1975, pp. 35-36, p. 178 no. 24, pl. 25 d-e; Dieterle 2007, p. 370 F 230); Paris, Louvre, LO MNC 1241 (De Ridder 1913, p. 29 no. 149, pl. XVI; Parke 1967, p. 276 no. 17; Walter-Karydi 1981, p. 20 no 14; Dieterle 2007, p. 371 F 242); Athens, NM 71 (Carapanos 1878, p. 37 no. 2; Parke 1967, p. 276 no. 17; Walter-Karydi 1981, p. 20 no 13; Dieterle 2007, p. 371 F 243); Ioannina, AM 1782 (Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 181 no. 90, pl. 36, a, a; Dieterle 2007, p. 404).

[18] As for 5th-4th centuries BC Corinthian artefacts: Athens, NM 1216 (Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 181 no. 84, pl. XXXIV, a (1); Dieterle 2007, p. 397); Athens, NM 1220 (Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 181 no. 83; Dieterle 2007, p. 397); Ioannina, AM 479 (Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 181 no. 86, pl. XXXVI, a(c); Dieterle 2007, p. 400); Athens, NM 1222 (Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 181, pl. XXXV, a, 3; Dieterle 2007, p. 397); Athens, NM 327a (Carapanos 1878, p. 86 no. 7, pl. XLII, 11; Hill 1962, p. 62 no. 37; Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 60, p. 181 no. 82, pl. XXXII, e; Dieterle 2007, p. 372 F 291); Berlin, AM misc. 10583 (Neugebauer 1923, pp. 351-352, fig. 4; Hill 1962, p. 61 no. 23; Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 178 no. 25, pl. XXV, c, z; Walter-Karydi 1981, p. 21 no. 39; Dieterle 2007, p. 371 F 256); Athens, NM 689 (Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 180 no. 70; Dieterle 2007, p. 395); Athens, NM 447 (Carapanos 1878, p. 48 no. 22, pl. XXVI, 4-4bis; Hill 1962, p. 60 no. 18; Vokotopoulou 1975, pp. 48-49, p. 179 no. 46, pl. XXIX, a-b; Dieterle 2007, p. 371 F 246); Athens, NM 358 (Carapanos 1878, p. 89 s), pl. XLVI, 6: Hill 1962, p. 62 no. 38; Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 59, p. 180 n. 78, pl. XXXIV, e); Athens, NM 1216 (Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 180 no. 75, pl. XXXIII, d-e; Dieterle 2007, p. 397); Athens, NM 1221 (Vokotopoulou 1975, p. 179 no. 47, pl. XXIX, c-d; Dieterle 2007, p. 397).

[19] Another factor emerges from the typological and iconographic reading of the offerings: the gender of the devotees. Corinthian devotees seem to have belonged predominantly to the male *élite*. In the wake of this iconographic analysis, the Pegasus – usually associated with Corinth and its colonies Lochin 1994, *VII.1*, pp. 214-230, part. pp. 214-217, p. 229 – that decorates the handles of two *oinochoai* (Paris, Louvre, LO MNC 1241; Athens, NM 71) and a plate (Berlin, AM Misc. 10588) provides positive evidence for the attribution of the offerings to Corinthian workshops.

Aletes, Dodona and Korinthos of Zeus

The text associating Corinth and Dodona is a *scholion* to a verse from Pindar's *7th Nemean*[20] – a poem celebrating the victory of the Aeginetan Sogenes[21], concerning the mythical re-foundation of Corinth by Aletes, after an oracle of Zeus.

Aletes, according to the scholiast[22], consulted the oracle of Dodona as to whether he would become king in Corinth; the god answered that he would be successful when someone gave him a lump of earth – ὅτε τις δῷ βῶλον γῆς – on a day of many garlands – ἐπιθέσθαι δὲ ἡμέρᾳ πολυστεφάνῳ. Aletes on his way

[20] Schol. Pind., *Nem.* VII, 155a. The dating of the poem is a matter of dispute. The *scholia* assigning a date to *7th Nemean* are corrupt (schol. Pind. *Nem.* VII, Insc.). Wilamowitz' dating of the poem to 487 BC on stylistic grounds (von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1908) has been rejected by several scholars (most notably Finley 1951; Radt 1958; Bowra 1964; Segal 1967, pp. 431-433, part. n. 4; Carey 1981, p. 133). Other scholars tend to date it between 476 and 460 BC: Segal 1967, p. 433; Loscalzo 2000, pp. 25-32 suggesting c. 475 BC; Pippin Burnett 2005, p. 179 and p. 185 putting forward c. 461 or rather the 460s.

[21] Sogenes of Aegina, son of Thearion, an Euxenid, was the first Aeginetan to win the boys' pentathlon at the games held for Zeus at Nemea (Pippin Burnett 2005, pp. 179-202).

[22] Schol. Pind., *Nem.* VII, 155a: ἅτε μαψυλάκας Διὸς Κόρινθος: μαψυλάκας ὁ μάτην φλυαρηθείς. Διὸς Κόρινθος δὲ παροιμία ἐστὶν ἐπὶ τῶν τὰ αὐτὰ λεγόντων· ἡ δὲ παροιμία ἐντεῦθεν ἔρπει. Ἀλήτης ἐλθὼν περὶ τῆς ἐν Κορίνθῳ βασιλείας προσῆλθε τῷ μαντείῳ τῷ ἐν Δωδώνῃ, ὅ ἐστι τοῦ Διός, καὶ ἔχρησεν αὐτῷ τότε κρατήσειν, ὅτε τις δῷ βῶλον γῆς· ἐπιθέσθαι δὲ ἡμέρᾳ πολυστεφάνῳ. ἐλθὼν οὖν ἐν Κορίνθῳ ᾔτει τινὰ ἄρτον ἀγροῖκον ὁ Ἀλήτης, ὁ δὲ λαβὼν βῶλον ἔδωκεν. ἐτελεῖτο δὲ καὶ θυσία τοῖς νεκροῖς ἐν Κορίνθῳ, δι' ἣν τῆς πόλεως ἐν μνήμασιν οὔσης ἐπέρχεται ὁ Ἀλήτης, καὶ εὑρὼν Κρέοντος θυγατέρας περὶ συνθήκας γενομένας, ἔφησέ τε ἐὰν κρατήσῃ, ἕξειν τὴν νεωτέραν αὐτῶν πρὸς γάμον, καὶ πείθεται ἡ κόρη καὶ προδίδωσι τὴν πόλιν τὰς πύλας ἀνοίξασα. καὶ κρατεῖ ὁ Ἀλήτης, καὶ ὠνόμασεν αὐτὴν Διὸς Κόρινθον, ἐπειδὴ διὰ τῆς μαντείας τοῦ Διὸς ἡ ἀρχὴ εἰς αὐτὸν ἦλθεν – «Like babbling "Corinth of Zeus": babbling is the action of one who talks nonsense in vain; *Corinth of Zeus* is a proverb for those who repeat the same things. The proverb arose thus: Aletes consulted the oracle of Dodona, that of Zeus, wondering if he could take power in Corinth, and he was told that he would indeed take power when somebody gave him a clod of earth; on the day of many crowns, it was added. So Aletes left for Corinth; he asked for bread from a farmer, who offered him a clod of earth. The oracle was fulfilled. On that day in Corinth sacrifices were offered to the dead, and for that reason the whole city was out near the sepulchres. Aletes, on arrival, found Creon's daughters, who bargained for the concession of power; he persuased the youngest by saying that if she helped him, he would marry her as soon as he rose to power. She betrayed the city and, opening the gates, let him in. And Aletes got power and called the city *Corinth of Zeus*, since he had obtained it thanks to the oracle of Zeus».

to Corinth met a farmer, who offered him a clod of earth as food – ὁ δὲ λαβὼν βῶλον ἔδωκεν. On that same day sacrifices to the dead were being made in Corinth – θυσία τοῖς νεκροῖς ἐν Κορίνθῳ – and for this reason the citizens were out of city, visiting the tombs on which, as implied, garlands were put. Only the daughters of Creon were in Corinth: they were inclined to help Aletes, who had declared that, if he obtained power, he would marry the youngest of them. The girl, persuaded, opened the doors of the city – and Aletes became king. He re-named the city "Corinth of Zeus" in honour of the oracle that had predicted his success.

As Parke rightly highlighted, «this complicated story is evidently put together out of various elements»[23]. The motive that receipt of a clod of earth conveys sovereignty is ancient; it is frequently attested in foundation stories and in traditional folk-tales[24]. To this most ancient nucleus, a second narrative element was added, as indicated not only by the use of the verb ἐπιθέσθαι, but also by the fact that the expression «Aletes accepts even a clod of earth» – δέχεται καὶ βῶλον Ἀλήτης – circulated separately as a proverb. Duris of Samos[25] had mentioned it already in the 4th century BC and, later, the paraemiographers used it[26]. The *paroimia* has a rhythmic cadence, sounding like the second part of a hexameter and, thus, it is usually believed to have been part of a Corinthian epic poem. More precisely, it is considered as a fragment of Eumelus of Corinth's *Korinthiaka*[27]. Finally, since the aim of the scholiast was not to explain the sentence «Aletes accepts even a clod of earth», but the expression "Διὸς Κόρινθος", the account ends with the foundation of the city,

[23] Parke 1967, pp. 129-131.

[24] Malkin 1994, pp. 174-181. On the metaphor of the clod of earth in relation to fertility and feminine element, Calame 2011, pp. 130-133.

[25] Duris *FGrHist* 76 F 84 (= Plut., *De proverbiis Alexandrinorum* I, 48), who seemed to have contaminated the tradition on Aletes with the return of the Heracleidae, as he mentions Aletes returning from his exile, Salmon 1984, p. 38 n. 5. On Aletes and the return of the Heracleidae, Hall 1997, pp. 58-59.

[26] Plut., *De proverbiis Alexandrinorum* I, 48; Zenob. III, 22; Diogenian. IV, 27; Hesych., s.v. Διὸς Κόρινθος.

[27] Will 1955, pp. 285-286; Parke 1967, p. 130; Salmon 1984, p. 38; Malkin 1994, p. 180 n. 47; Hall 1997, p. 58; Lelli 2006, p. 409 n. 267. On Eumelus Musti 1986, pp. 205-206; West 2002; Debiasi 2004; Debiasi 2015.

dedicated to the god, who predicted Aletes' success – καὶ κρατεῖ ὁ Ἀλήτης, καὶ ὠνόμασεν αὐτὴν Διὸς Κόρινθον, ἐπειδὴ διὰ τῆς μαντείας τοῦ Διὸς ἡ ἀρχὴ εἰς αὐτὸν ἦλθεν.

One more point should be added to Parke's remarks. The account of the scholiast explaining the expression "Διὸς Κόρινθος" in the last verse of the *7th Nemean* has nothing to do with the meaning of Pindar's actual words[28]. The poet is referring to the pointless and tedious repetition of the same things[29], as is pointed out by the scholiast himself in the opening sentence – Διὸς Κόρινθος δὲ παροιμία ἐστὶν ἐπὶ τῶν τὰ αὐτὰ λεγόντων[30]. In explaining the proverb, the scholiast introduced the story of Aletes, which has no actual link with the saying "Διὸς Κόρινθος". It seems clear, therefore, that two different exegeses of the expression "Διὸς Κόρινθος" existed[31], and that the scholiast singled out the one referring to Corinth as the city (ἡ Κόρινθος), defined as belonging to Zeus, even though this has no relevance to the meaning of the Pindar's verse. In the Ode, however, Korinthos is masculine (ὁ Κόρινθος) and this choice of sex indicates that the eponymous hero, Korinthos the son of Zeus (ὁ Διὸς Κόρινθος), is referred to (even though the article is lacking). Yet, this point too is irrelevant. Although the Pindaric expression might contain both meanings, no potential ambiguity existed: several other 5th-and-4th-century BC sources, which

[28] This has been already pointed out by Erasmus of Rotterdam (*Adagia*, 1050): *Interpres hoc loco fabulam adfert, ad proverbium hoc, meo quidem animo, non multum pertinentem* […].

[29] Pind., *Nem*. VII, 104-105: αὐτὰ δὲ τρὶς τετράκι τ' ἀμπολεῖν / ἀπορία τελέθει, τέκνοι- / σιν ἅτε μαψυλάκας "Διὸς Κόρινθος": «but ploughing the same / ground three times or four ends in futility, / much like the child who barks out to the others, / "Korinthos was son of Zeus"!» (transl. Pippin Burnett).

[30] This is the most accredited explanation of the proverb: Zenob. III, 22; Hesych., s.v. Διὸς Κόρινθος; *Suda*, s.v. Διὸς Κόρινθος; schol. Aristoph., *Ranae* 439; Tzetz, *Comm. in Aristoph. Ranas* 439. An alternative, although less common, explanation refers «to pompous people who get their comeuppance» – ἐπὶ τῶν ἄγαν μὲν ὑπερσεμνυνομένων, κακῶς δὲ καὶ πονηρῶς ἀπαλλαττόντων – Ephorus *FGrHist* 70 F 19 (= schol. Plato, *Euthyd*. 292e 1-18), or to «those who are, [on the one hand excessively] pompous, but, [on the other] run away in a base and cowardly manner» – ἐπὶ τῶν ἄγαν σεμνυνομένων, κακῶς καὶ δειλῶς ἀπαλλαττόντων τὴν παροιμίαν ταύτην τετάχθαι – Demon *FGrHist* 327 F 19 (= schol. Pind., *Nem*. VII, 155b); *Suda*, s.v. Ὁ Διὸς Κόρινθος.

[31] Lelli 2006, p. 409.

conform to the same sense, use the expression in the masculine form. Thus, without any doubt, they refer to the eponym[32].

As to the actual story generating the proverb, we can recover it thanks to a second *scholion* to the same Pindaric verse[33],

[32] Aristoph., *Ranae* 439; *Eccl*. 828; fr. 524 (Kassel, Austin); Plat., *Euthyd*. 292e; Ephorus *FGrHist* 70 F 19; Demon *FGrHist* 327 F 19 (= schol. Pind., *Nem*. VII, 155b).

[33] Schol. Pind., *Nem*. VII, 155b (= Demon *FGrHist* 327 F19): παροιμία ἐστὶν ἐπὶ τῶν τὰ αὐτὰ λεγόντων ὁ Διὸς Κόρινθος, ὅταν δυσεξελίκτως ἀναπολῶσι τὰ αὐτὰ πολλάκις. ἐγὼ οὖν, φησίν, οὐκ εἰμὶ Διὸς Κόρινθος. δοκεῖ οὖν ἀπὸ τοιούτου τινὸς εἰρῆσθαι ἡ παροιμία· Μεγαρέας φασὶ Κορινθίων ἀποίκους, καὶ πολλὰ τοῖς Κορινθίοις κατ' ἰσχὺν τῆς πόλεως ὑπείκειν· ἄλλα τε γὰρ πλείονα τοὺς Κορινθίους προστάσσειν, καὶ τῶν Βακχιαδῶν εἴ τις τελευτήσαι, διώκουν δὲ οὗτοι τὴν πόλιν, ἔδει Μεγαρέων ἄνδρας καὶ γυναῖκας ἐλθόντας εἰς Κόρινθον συγκηδεύειν τὸν νεκρὸν τῶν Βακχιαδῶν. ὡς δὲ ὕβρεως οὐδὲν ἀπέλειπον οἱ Κορίνθιοι, τὰ δὲ τῶν Μεγαρέων ἔρρωτο, καὶ πρὸς ἐλπίσι τοῦ μηδὲν παθεῖν ἀποστάντας αὐτοὺς, ἀλλ' ἀφεῖναι, πέμπουσι δῆτα πρέσβεις οἱ Κορίνθιοι κατηγορήσοντας τῶν Μεγαρέων, οἳ προσελθόντες εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἄλλα τε πολλὰ διεξῆλθον καὶ τέλος, ὅτι δικαίως <ἂν> στενάξειεν ἐπὶ τοῖς γενομένοις ὁ Διὸς Κόρινθος, εἰ μὴ λήψοιτο δίκην παρ' αὐτῶν. ἐφ' οἷς παροξυνθέντες οἱ Μεγαρεῖς τοὺς πρέσβεις λίθοις ἔβαλον· καὶ μετὰ μικρὸν ἐπιβοηθησάντων τινῶν τοῖς Κορινθίοις καὶ μάχης γενομένης νικήσαντες, φυγῇ τῶν Κορινθίων ἀποφυγόντων ἐφαπτόμενοι, κτείνοντες ἅμα παίειν τὸν Διὸς Κόρινθον ἐκέλευον. ὅθεν φησὶν ὁ Δήμων ἔτι καὶ νῦν ἐπὶ τῶν ἄγαν σεμνυνομένων, κακῶς καὶ δειλῶς ἀπαλλαττόντων τὴν παροιμίαν ταύτην τετάχθαι – «*Korinthos son of Zeus* is a proverb with reference to those who always say the same thing… Now, the proverb seems to have been spoken from some such (origins): They say that the Megarians are colonists of the Corinthians, and that they used to make many concessions to the Corinthians by dint of the city's power. For, they say, the Corinthians enjoined many things and especially if one of the Bakchiadai passed away (for these men used to run the city), it was mandatory for men and women of the Megarians to come to Corinth and join in tendance of the corpse [of the Bakchiadai]. And while the Corinthians were lacking nothing in hybris, but the affairs of the Megarians gained in strength, † and they, with hopes of revolting while suffering no harm, but to be set free †, the Corinthians sent ambassadors to accuse the Megarians, who recounted many other matters and, at the end, that justly would Korinthos son of Zeus sigh at the developments, unless he should obtain justice from them. Angered at this the Megarians <immediately> assailed the ambassadors with stones. And after a short time, when some people came to the aid of the Corinthians and a battle broke out, (the Megarians) emerged victorious, with the Corinthians departing in flight, and they, pursuing and killing, urged <one another> at the same time to strike *Korinthos son of Zeus*. Whence, says Demon, still even now, with reference to those who are, <on the one hand, excessively> pompous, but, <on the other>, run away in a base and cowardly manner, this proverb is marshaled» [transl. V. Parker, "Demon" (327), in *BNJ*]. The scholiast quotes Demon, but it is almost impossible to establish how much of the account of Demon (or perhaps Ephorus) is in the *scholion* [V. Parker, "Demon" (327), in *BNJ* F 19].

as well as to information from other sources[34]. The saying "Διὸς Κόρινθος" refers to those who keep repeating the same things – as the Corinthians did, when they appealed repeatedly to "Korinthos of Zeus" during a conflict with the Megarians, so enraging their opponents. The Corinthians escaped from the battlefield with the Megarians in pursuit, determined to inflict injury on "Korinthos of Zeus".

There is little hope in fixing a date to the conflict of the story between Megara and Corinth[35], we can only say that it must have happened after the fall of the Bacchiadae[36]. It is more useful to ponder on the fact that Eumelus, the poet of the Bacchiadae, did not think of the eponymous Korinthos as the son of Zeus: in his genealogy, preserved by Pausanias, Korinthos was the son of Marathon[37]. The *Periegetes*, moreover, writes that the lineage according to which Korinthos is Zeus' son was beloved by the Corinthians, but it is likely that this genealogy was established in a post-Bacchiadae phase. Pindar supplies the *terminus ante quem*: since his use of "Διὸς Κόρινθος" indicates that the expression was popular and well-known, we must assume that it was current by the 6th century BC.

Another aspect worth reflecting on is the anti-Corinthian bias both of the account and of the proverb "Διὸς Κόρινθος", which was drawn from it. It is clearly as a reaction to this negative use of their civic genealogy, that the Corinthians revised the saying "Διὸς Κόρινθος", discarding its reading in the genealogical sense, which had been used against them, and introducing

[34] Schol. Aristoph., *Ranae* 439; schol. Plat., *Euthyd*. 292e; Tzetz., *Comm. in Aristoph. Ranas* 439. The most substantial variation is in a *scholion* to Aristophanes' *Ranae* in which the opponents of the Corinthians are not the Megarians, but the Corcyraeans.

[35] On the conflicts between Corinth and Megara in the 6th and 5th centuries BC, Paus. VI, 19, 13. On the Megarian defection from the Peloponnesian League, Thuc. I, 103, 4; Diod. XI, 79, 1-2; Halliday 1928, pp. 98-100; Piccirilli 1975, pp. 125-131; Legon 1981, pp. 59-70; Koῖν 2003. Plutarch alludes [Plut., *Mor*. 295B-C (= *Quaest. Graec*. 17); Halliday 1928, pp. 95-99; Piccirilli 1975, pp. 127-129; Robu 2014, pp. 42-50] to a territorial war between Megara and Corinth, dating broadly to «the olden times» – τὸ παλαιὸν.

[36] In the *scholion* to Pindar the Bacchiadae are mentioned as dominating the Megarians.

[37] Paus. II, 1, 1.

a "civic" reading, which celebrated the foundation of the city. Accordingly, the eponymous hero, descending from Zeus, takes a back seat, whilst the entire city is now envisaged as belonging to Zeus. The story of Aletes justifies and supports this revision: it takes the legend of the clod of earth, already used by Eumelus, and incorporates it in a new story, in which particular emphasis was given to the oracular response of Zeus.

In a foundation story, such as that of Aletes, one might expect to find mention of Apollo, as the protector and promoter of a *ktisis*[38]. Yet here it was Zeus Dodonaeus acting as the oracular voice guiding Aletes in his enterprise, a *unicum* in Greek foundation stories[39], that can be explained because the expression "Διὸς Κόρινθος" needed to be given a new meaning.

Yet at the time of the Cypselidae, in particular during Periander's tyranny, the reference to Dodona is not simply to be regarded as the semantic re-elaboration of a proverb that had acquired a derogatory meaning for the Corinthians. It is currently *communis opinio* that the relationship between Corinth and Delphi, which was excellent at the time of Cypselus[40], deteriorated under Periander, in particular after the Sacred War[41]. Periander transferred his devotion from Apollo to Zeus, manifesting it openly at Olympia[42], and, we should assume, at Dodona too.

The involvement of Dodona in a story concerning the foundation of Corinth answers the needs, on the one hand to supply at the time of Periander a new favourable meaning to the proverb "Corinth of Zeus", removing its association with enemies of the city, and, on the other, to exploit and accentuate the worthy

[38] E. g. Callimac., *Hymn.* II, 55-57: Φοίβῳ δ' ἑσπόμενοι πόλιας διεμετρήσαντο / ἄνθρωποι· Φοῖβος γὰρ ἀεὶ πολίεσσι φιλήδεῖ / κτιζομένῃσ': «And Phoebus it is that men follow when they map out cities. For Phoebus himself dot wave their foundations» (transl. A.W. Mair).

[39] Parke 1967, p. 129. Other foundation oracles, attributed to Dodona, concern non-Greek peoples (Moscati Castelnuovo 2014, p. 21), with the exception of the one recorded by Pausanias on the Athenian colonization of *Sikelia* (Paus. VIII, 11, 12), on which see n. 57 p. 144.

[40] Scott 2010, pp. 41-45.

[41] Salmon 1984, pp. 227-228; Antonelli 1993, pp. 28-32.

[42] Scott 2010, p. 44, n. 15 and p. 152.

link with Dodona, attributing to the sanctuary the prophecy of its foundation. Behind this reference to Dodona, we should detect the contacts of Corinth with the North-West, which had been established since the beginning of the 8th century BC, as the archaeological evidence testifies.

Chapter 4

The Greeks of the North-West

For the north-west Greek communities, either directly or indirectly related to Corinth, such as Corcyra[1], Apollonia[2], Epidamnus[3], Leukas[4], Ambracia[5], Dodona was one, if not the only, major sanctuary one could visit within a reasonable distance. Public and private consultations are recorded in first place by the oracular tablets, which attest several local ethnic and idiosyncratic Epirote personal names; in less revealing cases – unfortunately the great majority – the north-west provenance of the consultant(s) is inferred by the linguistic and palaeographic features of the inscription[6]: for example in the case of a certain Hermon[7], who consulted the oracle about the fertility of his wife Kretaia in the last quarter of the 6th century BC[8]. He does not supply his ethnic, and so his place of origin, i.e. one of the Corinthian colonies of the Illyrian-Epirote coast, is ascertained by the dialect used in the inscription:

*h*érμō̃ν τίνα
κα θεō̃ν ποτθέμ-

[1] Founded by Corinth (Hdt. III, 49, 1; Thuc. I, 25, 3; I, 38, 1).

[2] Founded by Corinth and Corcyra (Ps.-Scymn. 439-440; Strabo VII, 5, 8, C 316) or only by Corinth (Thuc. I, 26, 2; Plut., *Mor.* 522E; Steph. Byz. s.v. Ἀπολλωνία and Γυλάκεια).

[3] Founded by Corinth and Corcyra (Thuc. I, 24, 1; Ps.-Scymn. 435-436).

[4] Founded by Corinth (Hdt. VIII, 45; Thuc. I, 30, 2; Ps.-Scylax 34).

[5] Founded by Corinth (Thuc. II, 80, 3; Strabo VII, 7, 6, C 325; X, 2, 8, C 452; Ps.-Scymn. 455).

[6] Lhôte 2006, pp. 365-371.

[7] Lhôte 2006, no. 41.

[8] Piccinini 2015a, pp. 174-175.

ενος γενεά ϝ-
οι γένοιτο ἐκ Κ-
ρητaίας ὀνά-
σιμος πὸτ τᾶι ἐ-
άσσαι.

«Hermon asks with what god he should reconcile to get from Kretaia offspring in addition to what he has now».

Later literary, epigraphic and archaeological evidence testifies to several consultations, offerings and dedications by private local individuals and *poleis* from the 5th century BC onwards. Private enquiries often concerned matters of fertility, as for Deinokles of Apollonia in Illyria in the second half of the 4th century BC[9], and residential shifts, as in the cases of a 5th century BC unknown inhabitant of Orikos[10] and a 4th century BC consultant from Ambracia[11].

Among the private forms of devotion, the dedication of a certain Agathon of Zakynthos in the last third of the 4th century BC should be interpreted as a sign of the enlarged catchment area of the shrine by then[12]. This inscribed small bronze plaque in west Greek writing was found within the *temenos*. It was, as the inscription says, a δῶρον, in which a link of proxeny between the dedicant and the Molossians «throughout thirty generations from Troy» – ἐν τριάκοντα γενεαῖς ἐκ Τρωίας (ll. 7 -9) – is claimed. A *phallus* in relief, likely connected with the significance of the offering, decorated the lower part of the plaque:

θεός τύχα
Ζεῦ Δωδώνης μεδέ-
ων, τόδε σοί δῶρον πέ-
μπω παρ' ἐμοῦ: Ἀγάθων
Ἐχεφύλου καὶ γενεὰ
πρόξενοι Μολοσσῶν
καὶ συμμάχων ἐν τ-

[9] Lhôte 2006, no. 50. Later, in the 4th-3rd centuries BC, a certain Eukles from Ambracia consulted the oracle because of his health problems and enquired after future success (Lhôte 2006, no. 65).

[10] Lhôte 2006, no. 54, the alternative place of residence is not mentioned.

[11] Lhôte 2006, no. 106, the option is to move ἐς Μεσσήνην.

[12] Carapanos 1878, p. 39, no. 1, pl. XXII; Fraser 2003, with a complete bibliography on the inscription.

ριάκοντα γενεαῖς
ἐκ Τρωίας Κασσάν-
δρας γενεά 10
Ζακύνθιοι

«God! Good Fortune! Zeus, Lord over Dodona, I send this gift to you from me: Agathon, the son of Echephylos, and his offspring, *proxenoi* of the Molossoi and of their Allies throughout thirty generations from Troy, the race of Kassandra, Zakynthians» (transl. P.M. Fraser).

The reference to a tradition linking the inhabitants of Zakynthos and the Trojans, via Kassandra, is claimed in the last lines (ll. 9-11). The document has generated controversial interpretations, which strive to bring together the document, Agathon and the Trojan prophetess, daughter of Priam, into a single coherent picture[13]. These were gathered and discussed by Fraser[14], who also endeavoured to fit into the picture all the elements in the δῶρον: the Trojan tradition, the proxeny, the Zakynthians and the *phallus*. Whereas the significance of the link between Agathon, his family, and the prophetess Kassandra cannot be established, Fraser emphasizes that the island of Zakynthos had a direct and indirect link with the Trojans: according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the *polis* was founded by Zakynthos, a son of Dardanos[15]; in the *Iliad* Priam himself was called "Dardanides", that is to say son or grandson of Dardanos[16]; moreover, Aeneas was credited as the founder of a temple of Aphrodite where he also established *agones*, still performed in the 1st century BC[17]. The *phallus* in the relief might have been a symbol either of Agathon's genitalia perpetuating the future links between his family and the Molossians, or a representation of the ideal (re)-union of the twins, Kassandra and Helenos, through their descendants, respectively Agathon, one of the Zakynthians, and the Molossians.

13 Dakaris 1964, p. 102, pp. 106-108, part. p. 107 n. 2; Mazzoldi 2001; Fraser 2003, pp. 27-31.
14 Fraser 2003.
15 Dion. Hal., *A.R.* I, 50; Chiai 2017, p. 129.
16 Hom., *Il.* VII, 366; XXI, 34.
17 Dion. Hal., *A.R.* I, 50, 3.

Whether or not Fraser's reading is cogent, it is important to point out Agathon's endeavour to tie himself (and perhaps all the Zakynthians) to the Molossians via Dodona.

Within the cluster of public acts of devotion and consultations at Dodona, epigraphic and literary sources testify to a few striking cases, which are important not only for our understanding of the growing importance of the Epirote shrine in the 5th and 4th centuries BC, but also for enriching our knowledge and the corpus of evidence, *per se* very limited, of two small *poleis* of the ancient world, Thronion in southern Illyria[18] and Paleis on the island of Kephallenia[19].

In the newly published volume of all the oracular questions, a tablet, although scantly preserved, testifies to the inquiry of the inhabitants of Thronion in the first half of the 5th century BC[20]:

Θρονιεῖς [- - -]
καὶ τὰν μαντε[ίαν - - -]
«The inhabitants of Thronion [consult - - -] and the oracle [- - -]».

The editors' dating is based on paleographical elements, but also, as they explicitly admit, on the literary mention of the war between Apollonia and Thronion in the mid-5th century BC[21]. Although it is tempting to connect this historical event with the consultation of the Thronians at Dodona, no element can be advanced in support of this hypothesis. More interesting is to point out that this is the earliest piece of evidence mentioning the ethnic of the inhabitants of Thronion.

Likewise, among the 5th century BC material evidence found during the archaeological excavations, there is a bronze inscribed ring band (d. 0. 11 m) bearing the dedication from the inhabitants of the *polis* of Paleis in Kephallenia[22]:

18 *Inventory*, p. 326.

19 *Inventory*, pp. 369-370 no. 132.

20 DVC no. 1184B.

21 Paus. V, 22, 2-4. Also *CEG* 390 = *IApollonia* 303 and Piccinini 2011 with previous bibliography.

22 Carapanos 1878, p. 44 no. 14, pl. XXIV, 6 and 6 bis; Lazzarini 1976, p. 308 no. 907 bis; Tzouvara-Souli 1991, p. 247, fig. 4 a-b. Lazzarini (1976, p. 308 no. 907 bis) dates it to the 5th century BC according to the letter shape, but Dieterle (2007,

Παλεῖς Διὶ Ναίωι
«The Palians to Zeus Naios».

The metal strip was, probably, meant to bind a larger object, now lost, perhaps made of a perishable material.

Apollonia of Illyria, between Delphi and Dodona

Significant, although not necessarily historically trustworthy, is the tradition concerning the consultation of the Apolloniates at Dodona[23] between the second half of the 6th century and the first quarter of the 5th century BC, a generation before the Persian war. The story is about Evenius of Apollonia and how he acquired his divinatory abilities. It is told by Herodotus because his son Deiphonus, who inherited the mantic gift of his father[24], was the seer of the Greeks at the battle of Mycale in 479 BC[25]. According to Herodotus, the city of Apollonia used to appoint the guardianship of the flock sacred to the Sun to one of the most notable and wealthy citizens – ἄνδρες οἱ πλούτῳ τε καὶ γένεϊ δοκιμώτατοι τῶν ἀστῶν – on instruction from a certain oracle – ἐκ θεοπροπίου τινός[26]. While in charge of the sacred flock, Evenius from Apollonia fell asleep and, as a result, sixty sheep were eaten by wolves. Despite his attempts to cover up his mistake by buying new animals, the city of Apollonia «brought him to judgment and condemned him to lose his eyesight for sleeping at his watch» – ὑπαγαγόντες μιν ὑπὸ δικαστήριον κατέκριναν, ὡς τὴν φυλακὴν κατακοιμίσαντα, τῆς ὄψιος στερηθῆναι. From the day

p. 91) suggests a later chronology, i.e. 4th-3rd centuries BC, without putting forward any argument.

23 Hdt. IX, 92, 2-94.

24 Hdt. IX, 93, 4-94, 3. Although Deiphonus is a historical figure, the story about his father Evenius' acquisition of divinatory skills has a legendary flavour. Scholars (Crahay 1956, pp. 82-84; Parke 1967, pp. 134-135; Flower, Marincola 2002, pp. 266-270; Asheri 2006, pp. 304-307) have long discussed whether Deiphonus or his father Evenius invented the story, but the question has no answer. On Evenius' prophetic arts, Grottanelli 1994-1995; Burkert 1997; Griffiths 1999; Grottanelli 2003; Reggiani 2011.

25 Hdt. IX, 92.

26 Very likely it was a public office, which is supposed to be held for a year, according to an oracle (Hdt. IX, 92, 2).

of their so doing, «their flocks bore no offspring, nor did their land yield fruit as before» – αὐτίκα μετὰ ταῦτα οὔτε πρόβατά σφι ἔτικτε οὔτε γῆ ἔφερε ὁμοίως καρπόν. At this point they enquired at both Dodona and Delphi (named by Herodotus in that order) about the reasons for their affliction. The oracles blamed the Apolloniates and order them to compensate Evenius for the loss of his sight. In addition he received from the gods the gift for divination.

The choice of Apollo Pythios by the inhabitants of a *polis* honouring the god through its very name and, according to a legend, founded by Phoebus[27], needs no explanation. Public offerings by the Apolloniates at Delphi, as a contribution to the reconstruction of the temple in 361/0 BC, are literarily and epigraphically attested[28]. As far as Dodona is concerned there is no hint of any previous or later frequentation of the shrine by the Apolloniates, but its geographical proximity to the *polis* might justify its mention beside Delphi on this particular occasion and may, moreover, have produced real acts of devotions and consultations whose traces have not survived[29]. Such a factor, i.e. the physical proximity, was likely at the base of many acts of devotions and consultations performed at Dodona by those living nearby the shrine, like the Corcyraeans.

Corcyra's Consultations and Anathema

Among the north-western Greeks, the Corcyraeans were the most assiduous pilgrims of Dodona. In the 5th century BC, the Corcyraean Φείδης, a name not otherwise attested in ancient sources, consulted the oracle on the possibility of solving some-

27 *CEG* 390 = *IApollonia* 303 = Paus. V, 22, 3: the inscription on the monument of the Apolloniates at Olympia; Apollo as patron god of the *polis* is also shown on coins of the Roman period (Head 1911, pp. 265-266).

28 *IApollonia* T. 305, 2; *IApollonia* T. 310 (proxeny decree); Plut., *De Pyth. or.* XVI; Jacquemin 1999, p. 69.

29 According to Diodorus' account about Lysander's bribery attempt of the oracle of Dodona (XIV, 13, 4), a certain Pherecrates from Apollonia, «who was familiarly acquainted with the officers of the temple», was the go-between the Spartan nauarch and the shrine personnel. On the episode cf. pp. 91-93.

thing – περὶ τᾶς διαλυτήας, likely something connected with a trial – ἀντεγράψατο[30]. Because of the worn condition of the inscription not much can be said[31]:

θεός τύχα· ἐπικοιν[ῆται] Φείδης ὁ Κορ-
κυραῖος τῶι Διὶ τῶι Ναΐ[ωι καὶ τ]ᾶι Διώναι
περὶ τᾶς διαλυτήα[ς - - -] ΟΤΑΠΑΛΕΑΝ
ἀντεγράψ[α]το ἢ τυχ[αῖον] ΥΝ[- - -]ΗΥΝ[-]
καὶ λῶιον πράσσοι.

«God. Fortune. Pheides of Corcyra asks Zeus Naios and Dione on the cancellation […] whether […] will fare better to bring a counter-charge […]».

Other evidence of the ties between Corcyra and Dodona consists of several 4th century BC public consultations, preserved on lead tablets, as well as a monumental offering, now lost and recorded only by literary sources, whose dating needs to be reviewed.

The *polis* of Corcyra consulted Zeus Dodonaeus a few times in the 4th century[32]:

[θεός. ἐπικοινῶντ]αι Κορκ[υραῖοι τῶι Διὶ τῶι Ναίωι]
[καὶ τᾶι Διώναι τί]νι κα θεῶν [ἢ ἡρώων θύοντες καὶ]
[εὐχόμενοι τὰν πόλιν κάλ]λιστα καὶ ἀ[σφαλέστατα]
[— — — — — — — — — —] ϝοικέοιε[ν].

«God. The Corcyraeans ask Zeus Naios and Dione by sacrificing and praying to what god or hero the *polis* may live in the best and safest way […]».

θεόν. τ[ύ]χαν ἀγαθᾴ[ν].
ἐπ[ι]κοινῶνται τοὶ Κ[ο]ρκυρα[ῖοι τῶι Διὶ τῶι]
Νάωι καὶ τᾶι Δ[ι]ώναι τίνι κα [θ]εῶν [ἢ]
ἡρώων θύον[τ]ες καὶ εὐχ[ό]μενο<ι>
ὁμονοοῖεν ἐ[π]ὶ τὠγαθόν.

«God. The Corcyraeans ask Zeus Naios and Dione by sacrificing and praying to what god or hero can live in harmony for their good».

30 Same verb in Demosth. XLII, 17.

31 DVC 1088A.

32 Lhôte 2006, no. 1 on the good government of the city; Lhôte 2006, no. 3 on civic *concordia*; Lhôte 2006, no. 4 on some incomprehensible public matter.

θεός. ἐπικοινῶνται τοὶ Κορκυραῖοι τῶι Διὶ [Ναίωι καὶ τᾶι Διώναι τίνι κα θεῶν ἢ ἡρώων θύοντες [— — —]

«God. The Corcyraeans ask Zeus Naios and Dione by sacrificing and praying to what god or hero […]».

In one case the enquiry was done as a joint appeal with Orikos[33]:

[θ]εός. ἐπικοινῶνται τοὶ Κορκυ-
ραῖοι καὶ τοὶ Ὡρίκιοι τῶι Διὶ τῶι Ναί-
ωι καὶ τᾶι Διώναι τίνι κα θεῶν ἢ ἡ-
ρώων θύοντες καὶ εὐχόμενοι τὰ-
ν πόλιν κ̣άλλιστα οἰκεῦεγ καὶ ἀσφα-
λέστατα καὶ εὐκαρπία σφιν καὶ πο-
λυκαρπία τελέθοι καὶ κατόνασις παν-
τὸς τὠγαθοῦ {τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ}καρποῦ.

«God. The Corcyraeans and the inhabitants of Orikos ask Zeus Naios and Dione by sacrificing and praying to what god or hero they may live most fairly and safely, and there may be fine and fruitful crops for them and all benefit from the good crop».

The questions, generically concerning Corcyra's welfare and prosperity, do not necessarily have to be connected to specific historical events in which the stability, peace and fortune of the island were threatened, but might have been more in the way of general and customary requests of reassurance for a *polis* consulting the (closest) trusted oracular centre. Likewise other communities consulted the oracle for welfare and prosperity[34].

The last piece of evidence concerning the Corcyraeans that I will consider is an impressive *anathema* dedicated by the *polis*[35]. According to Stephanus of Byzantium[36] in the sanctuary of Zeus Dodonaeus there were «two pillars in line and near to each other; and on the one is a bronze, not large and similar to modern cauldrons, and on the other a boy holding a whip in the right hand at whose right side stood the column supporting the caul-

[33] Lhôte 2006, no. 2 for the welfare and a good harvest of Corcyra and Orikos.

[34] Lhôte 2006, nos. 5-7, 9, 14.

[35] Demon *FGrHist* 327 F 20a-b (= *Suda*, s.v. Δωδωναῖον χαλκεῖον), also Steph. Byz. s.v. Δωδώνη (= Polemon *FHG III* F 30 and Aristides *FHG IV* F 30a); Zenob. VI, 5.

[36] Steph. Byz. s.v. Δωδώνη.

dron»[37]. Stephanus explicitly acknowledges his sources, i.e. the 3rd-2nd centuries BC antiquarian Polemon and the 2nd century BC proverb-writer Aristides, then goes on to say that «whenever it chanced that a wind was blowing, the lashes of the bronze whip, just as with true lashes being uplifted by the breeze, chanced to touch the bronze and to do this unremittingly as long as the wind persisted»[38]. No information on the occasion of the *anathema* and its location within the *temenos* is given.

The description of the offering given by Stephanus is by way of explaining the expression Δωδωναῖον χαλκεῖον, used by Menander to describe the never-ending talking of a woman, named Myrtile, in his *Arrephorus*[39]. These words later became proverbial. Stephanus supplies an alternative explanation of the saying, citing Demon (4th century BC), according to whom at Dodona the temple (ναὸς) has no walls, «but many tripods near one another, so that a person grasping one sends by this touch the re-echo to each, and the echo continues until someone touches the (first) one»[40]. Demon's description of the sacred landscape at Dodona, however, sounds anachronistic: he seems unaware of the monumental growth of the sanctuary in the 4th century, after temple-like buildings started to be erected from the end of the 5th

[37] A very suggestive visual tentative reconstruction of the monument is given by Cook 1902, p. 12.

[38] Steph. Byz. s.v. Δωδώνη: […] ἡ παροιμία δὲ οὔ φησιν εἰ μὴ χαλκίον ἕν, ἀλλ' οὐ λέβητας ἢ τρίποδας πολλούς. προσθετέον οὖν τῷ περιηγητῇ Πολέμωνι ἀκριβῶς τὴν Δωδώνην ἐπισταμένῳ. καὶ Ἀριστείδη τὰ τούτου μεταγεγραφότι, λέγοντι κατὰ τὴν β΄ „ἐν τῇ Δωδώνῃ στῦλοι δύο παράλληλοι καὶ πάρεγγυς ἀλλήλων. καὶ ἐπὶ μὲν θατέρου χαλκίον ἐστὶν +καὶ πάρεγγυς ἀλλήλων. καὶ ἐπὶ μὲν θατέρου χαλκίον ἐστὶν οὐ μέγα τοῖς δὲ νῦν παραπλήσιον λέβησιν, ἐπὶ δὲ θατέρου παιδάριον ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ χειρὶ μαστίγιον ἔχον, οὗ κατὰ τὸ δεξιὸν μέρος ὁ τὸ λεβήτιον ἔχων κίων ἕστηκεν. ὅταν οὖν ἄνεμον συμβῇ πνεῖν, τοὺς τῆς μάστιγος ἱμάντας χαλκοῦς ὄντας ὁμοίως τοῖς ἀληθινοῖς ἱμᾶσιν αἰωρουμένους ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος συνέβαινε ψαύειν τοῦ χαλκίου καὶ τοῦτο ἀδιαλείπτως ποιεῖν, ἕως ἂν ὁ ἄνεμος διαμένῃ"[…].

[39] Menander fr. 65 (Kassel, Austin). The proverb is recorded by the paraemiographers (Zenob. VI, 5; Diogenian. VIII, 32; *Mantissa Proverbiorum* III, 2; Macarius Chrysocephalus III, 42), but does not seem very popular in literary sources as it is attested only by Callimac. fr. 483 (Pfeiffer) and *Hymn*. IV, 286.

[40] Demon *FGrHist* 327 F 20a-b = Steph. Byz. s.v. Δωδώνη: […] ἔστι καὶ Δωδωναῖον χαλκίον παροιμία ἐπὶ τῶν πολλὰ λαλούντων, ὡς μὲν ὁ Δήμων φησίν „ἀπὸ τοῦ τὸν ναὸν τοῦ Δωδωναίου Διὸς τοίχους μὴ ἔχοντα, ἀλλὰ τρίποδας πολλοὺς ἀλλήλων πλησίον, ὥστε τὸν ἑνὸς ἁπτόμενον παραπέμπειν διὰ τῆς ψαύσεως τὴν ἐπήχησιν ἑκάστῳ, καὶ διαμένειν τὸν ἦχον ἄχρις ἄν τις τοῦ ἑνὸς ἐφάψηται" […].

century BC[41]. Demon's account, thus, does not seem to be based on personal acquaintance and depends, probably, on a yet earlier source, which described the landscape at Dodona and the many tripods there, before the monumental development of the shrine. In Demon's version, here diverging from Polemon's and Aristides' testimonies, it is multiple vessels, and not a single cauldron, that produced the echo effects[42]. For this reason, Parke rightly points out that since Menander talks of an echo started by a touch, this would only be possible for a cauldron standing on, or close to, the ground, but not one set on a column of any height. This may mean, Parke suggests, that Menander had read Demon (or his source), which he quoted and glossed with a phrase or two borrowed from that description[43].

According to Parke, the *anathema* should have been made before the time of Polemon, and not much before 500 BC[44]. Dieterle, who compared the lost dedication of the Corcyraeans at Dodona with the Naxian Sphinx[45] and the Serpent Column for the Plateia victory at Delphi, dating respectively to 570-560 BC and to 478 BC[46], suggests that one of the limits of the chronological span for the erection of the monument can be fixed at the beginning of the 5th century or even the 6th century BC[47]. However, considering the high number of similar double-column monuments at Delphi dating to the Hellenistic period, it is not possible to date such an elaborate *anathema* before the second half of the 4th century BC[48]. Remains of at least eight bi-columnar offerings, some of which were dedicated by people from north-western Greece and belong to the 3rd century BC, were

41 Parke 1967, p. 87. For the late monumentalization of Dodona Piccinini 2016a.

42 According to Parke, the echo from the cauldrons as described by Demon was probably a merely accidental event: the vases were not intended to resonate when dedicated, «though possibly once discovered the phenomenon may have been exploited locally as a marvel» (Parke 1967, pp. 86-91).

43 Parke 1967, p. 89.

44 Parke 1967, p. 88.

45 Bommelaer 1991, pp. 144-147; Jacquemin 1999, pp. 207-208; Scott 2010, pp. 46-47.

46 Bommelaer 1991, pp. 165-167; Jacquemin 1999, p. 72, p. 84, pp. 251-253; Scott 2010, pp. 85-86.

47 Dieterle 2007, pp. 62-65.

48 Jordan-Ruwe 1995, pp. 21-30; Schmidt 1995, pp. 182-192, pp. 532-538.

found in the sanctuary of Apollo Pythios[49]. The most famous votive consists of two tall Ionic columns supporting an architrave, on top of which in turn were set four statues portraying the dedicant Aristaneita, daughter of Timolaos, from Aetolia and other family members[50].

In the light of these parallels, the Corcyraean *anathema* at Dodona, a boy with a whip, might be one of the earliest examples of the two-column offering; it should date no earlier than the mid-4th century BC[51].

The dedication was still visible, although worn, in the 1st century AD: «in our times, says Lucius of Tarrha, while the handle of the whip <still survived>, the lashes have fallen off. However, from one of the locals we heard that whenever <the bronze> used to be struck by the whip and it rang for a long time, inasmuch as Dodona remains wintry, it reasonably survived into a proverb» (transl. N.F. Jones)[52].

The *anathema* is also described by Strabo, who, in a fragmentary passage, refers to two proverbs, i.e. "the copper vessel in Dodona" and "the scourge of the Corcyraeans". He provides information on the characteristics of the monument, which he describes, and its functioning: «these bones, striking the copper vessel continuously when they were swung by the winds, would produce tones so long that anyone who measured the time from the beginning of the tone to the end could count to four hundred». Strabo finally alludes to a second proverb, "the *mastix* of the Corcyraeans"[53].

[49] Schmidt 1995, pp. 532-535.

[50] Jacquemin 1985, p. 33; Bommelaer 1991, p. 166 fig. 69; pp. 235-236; Jordan-Ruwe 1995, pp. 21-23; Schmidt 1995, pp. 534-535; Jacquemin 1999, p. 64, p. 77; Ma 2013, p. 22.

[51] Smith 1988, pp. 9-12, pp. 269-272; Ma 2013, *passim*.

[52] Steph. Byz. s.v. Δωδώνη: […]„καὶ κατὰ μέν τοι τοὺς ἡμετέρους [χρόνους]" φησὶν ὁ Ταρραῖος „ἡ μὲν λαβὴ τῆς μάστιγος [διασέσωσται], οἱ δὲ ἱμάντες ἀποπεπτώκασιν. παρὰ μέντοι τῶν ἐπιχωρίων τινὸς ἠκούσαμεν ὡς, ἐπείπερ ἐτύπτετο μὲν [τὸ χαλκίον] ὑπὸ μάστιγος ἔχει δ' ἐπὶ πολὺν χρόνον, ὡς χειμερίου τῆς Δωδώνης ὑπαρχούσης, εἰκότως εἰς παροιμίαν περιεγένετο"[…].

[53] Strabo VII, fr. 3, C 325: Ὅτι ἡ παροιμία „τὸ ἐν Δωδώνῃ χαλκίον" ἐντεῦθεν ὠνομάσθη· χαλκίον ἦν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἔχον ὑπερκείμενον ἀνδριάντα κρατοῦντα μάστιγα χαλκῆν, ἀνάθημα Κορκυραίων· ἡ δὲ μάστιξ ἦν τριπλῆ ἁλυσιδωτὴ ἀπηρτημένους ἔχουσα ἐξ αὐτῆς ἀστραγάλους, οἳ πλήττοντες τὸ χαλκίον συνεχῶς,

The expression Κερκυραίων μάστιξ, at least in the 5th century BC sources, does not have any clear proverbial overtones, but rather refers to a characteristic weapon of the Corcyraeans. In Aristophanes' *Aves*, for instance, Pisthetaerus, holding a whip, says ironically to the Informant whether he would like «some Corcyraean wings» to persuade him to leave[54]. In a fragment of Phrynicus, which contains a lacuna, the significance of these words is not clear[55]. A *scholion* to Aristophanes' *Aves*, commenting the word Κορκυραῖα[56] in l. 1463 and quoting Aristotle's *Kerkyraion Politeia*, makes reference to a very particular type of *mastix*, which was often used by the Corcyraeans in civil conflicts – συνεχῶς δὲ παρὰ Κορκυραίοις ἀταξίαι γίνονται. It was a double-lashed device, of large size, with a handle made of ivory. Because of its peculiarity and frequent use, the expression became proverbial, as Aristotle says[57]. Thucydides confirms that whips were used in Corcyra to beat the prisoners taken by the leaders of the democrats during

ὁπότε αἰωροῖντο ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνέμων, μακροὺς ἤχους ἀπειργάζοντο, ἕως ὁ μετρῶν τὸν χρόνον ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ ἤχου μέχρι τέλους καὶ ἐπὶ τετρακόσια προέλθοι· ὅθεν καὶ ἡ παροιμία ἐλέχθη „ἡ Κερκυραίων μάστιξ." – «The proverbial phrase, *The copper vessel in Dodona*, originated thus: in the temple was a copper vessel with a statue of a man situated above it and holding a copper scourge, dedicated by the Corcyraeans; the scourge was three-fold and wrought in chain fashion, with bones strung from it; and these bones, striking the copper vessel continuously when they were swung by the winds, would produce tones so long that anyone who measured the time from the beginning of the tone to the end could count to four hundred. Whence, also, the origin of the proverbial term, *The scourge of the Corcyraeans*» (transl. H.L. Jones).

54 Aristoph., *Aves* 1462-1465: Πε. καὶ μὴν ἔστι μοι νὴ τὸν Δία κάλλιστα Κορκυραῖα τοιαυτὶ πτερά. Συ. οἴμοι τάλας, μάστιγ' ἔχεις. Πε. πτερὼ μὲν οὖν, οἷσί σε ποιήσω τήμερον βεμβικιᾶν.

55 Phrynicus, *Satyroi* fr. 47 (Kassel, Austin): Κορκυραῖαι δ' οὐδὲν < > ἐπιβάλλουσιν μάστιγες «Corcyraean whips not < > for ephemera».

56 Referred to πτερά, «wings», here in the dual form as alluding to the double straps of the whip (Zanetto 1987, p. 297).

57 Schol. Aristoph., *Aves* 1463 (= Aristot., *Kerkyraion Politeia* fr. 513 Rose): Κορκυραῖα: λέγεταί τις Κορκυραία μάστιξ. συνεχῶς δὲ παρὰ Κορκυραίοις ἀταξίαι γίνονται· διὰ τὸ στασιάζειν οὖν ἐπεπόλασε παρ' αὐτοῖς ἡ μάστιξ, ὥστε διπλαῖς κεχρῆσθαι μεγάλαις καὶ ἐλεφαντοκώποις. ἄλλως. λέγεταί τις Κορκυραία μάστιξ. Φρύνιχος Σατύροις „Κορκυραῖαι δ' οὐδὲν ἐπιβάλλουσι μάστιγες". ὥστε καὶ εἰς παροιμίαν ἤδη ἐλθεῖν. Ἀριστοτέλης δὲ τὸ Κορκυραία μάστιξ λέγων φησὶν οὕτως· „διὸ καὶ τὰς κώπας αὐτῶν ἐλεφαντίνας ἐποιήσαντο καὶ τῷ μεγέθει περιττάς· ὅθεν ἡ Κορκυραία ἐπεπόλασε μάστιξ καὶ εἰς παροιμίαν ἦλθε". ταῦτα δὲ λέγων τύπτει αὐτόν. Likewise Hesych., s.v. Κερκυραία μάστιξ and Zenob. IV, 49.

the final stage of the *stasis* in 425 BC: the convicts, in groups of twenty, were pushed out of a building in which they were imprisoned, passing in between two lines of fully armed hoplites, who were authorized to strike them even with goads. Alongside there were μαστιγοφόροι, who from behind hastened those that walked too slowly[58]. From Thucydides' account it is evident that hoplites and *mastigophoroi* were Corcyraean citizens, armed differently, and that the *mastix* as well as the armaments of the hoplites were weapons of a specific social group. The very few general attestations of the μαστιγοφόροι, also known outside Corcyra[59], and of the Κερκυραίων μάστιξ, without any proverbial meaning, but referring to a special tool used by the Corcyraeans[60], confirm this hypothesis. The μάστιξ might have been primarily a weapon typical of the military equipment and manner of warfare conducted by the aristocracy[61], as is already implied in the epithet given to the Achaean hero Ajax Telamonius, the μαστιγοφόρος[62].

The significance of the monument of Corcyraeans at Dodona can be now understood: it had little to do, at least in its original purpose, with divination, ritual or any apotropaic practice[63], but more with the identity and values of the dedicants, the *élite* of Corcyra. A further element in support of this interpretation is the use of knucklebones interwoven into the three lashes of the whip. According to recent scholarship on the use and function of *astragaloi* in different archaeological contexts through time, knucklebones, before becoming toys for children, were symbols of social status[64]. The discovery of numerous, and fragmentary,

58 Thuc. IV, 47, 3.

59 In Persia (Xen., *Cyrop*. VIII, 3, 9) and Sparta (Xen., *Rep. Lac*. II, 2). On the aristocratic character of the Spartan *mastigophoroi* Lipka 2002, p. 119.

60 Xen., *Hell*. VI, 2, 15.

61 Moreover, it should also be taken into account that the whip is the instrument to control horses, which were a typical property of the aristocracy.

62 Schol. Soph., *Aiax* 1420. The iconography of Ajax, however, never depicts him with a *mastix*, but always with the silver sword donated to him by Hektor (Hom., *Il*. VII, 303).

63 Cook 1902; Kalligas 1976; Ducat 1995, pp. 363-368; Antonetti 2006, p. 69; D'Alessandro 2016, pp. 271-276.

64 In this respect original works are Carè 2009-2010; Carè 2010; Carè 2012; Carè 2017.

whip handles at Dodona, likely to be votives, might document dedications made by members of the Corcyraean aristocracy[65].

The 4th-3rd centuries BC dating of the Corcyraean monument at Dodona fits well with the late monumental development of the shrine – indeed it would be rather odd to find such pillars standing on the plain of Dodona in the 5th century BC or earlier, where even the most essential cult practice was performed in the open air, but also it chimes with the extensive Corcyraean association with the oracle, especially for public matters, in the 4th century BC.

[65] Athens, NM 147; Ioannina, AM 4670; Ioannina, AM 5854; Kalligas 1976; Dieterle 2007, pp. 62-67, pp. 174-175. Perhaps the numerous small rings and twisted wires found during the archaeological excavations pertained to Corcyraean whips offerings (*PAE* 1931, p. 85 pl. 2; *PAE* 1932 pp. 50-51 pl. 5-6; *EpeirChron* 1935, pl. 22).

Chapter 5

The Spartan Case

> Lacedaemonii omnia ad oracula referre consuerant.
> (Nep., *Lys*. III, 1)

The Spartans were extremely sensitive, more so than other Greeks, to everything connected with religion. Herodotus claims that «the gods' will weighed with them more than the will of man»[1]. Their recourse to oracles for private and private matters was particularly intense[2]. Of all the oracular shrines, Delphi had the greatest influence on Spartans[3]. As Richer rightly pointed out, however, «les gens de Sparte pouvaient consulter d'autres oracles que celui de Delphes»[4]. Cicero in *De divinatione* affirms that the Spartans in matters of grave concern always consulted the oracle of Delphi, that of Ammon or that of Dodona – *de rebus maioribus semper aut Delphis oraclum at ab Hammone aut a Dodona petebant*[5]. Pausanias confirms the Spartan penchant for Zeus Ammon by saying that «the Lacedaemonians are known from the beginning to have used the oracle in Libya more than any other Greeks»[6]. Moreover, he reports that when Lysander was besieging Aphytis[7] in Pallene in 405/4 BC: «Ammon appeared by night and declared that it would be

[1] Hdt. V, 63, 2.

[2] Crahay 1956, pp. 148-181 and pp. 308-319; Hodkinson 1983, pp. 239-281; Parker 1989; Richer 2012.

[3] Parker 1989; Richer 2012, pp. 271-297.

[4] Richer 2012, p. 306.

[5] Cic., *De div*. I, 43, 95. Only in one case, as far as we know, did the Spartans consult Olympia (Xen., *Hell*. IV, 7, 2-5; Richer 2012, pp. 303-304), whose oracle seems to have specialised in athletic responses (Parke 1967, p. 112; Taita 2001).

[6] Paus. III, 18, 3.

[7] *Inventory*, p. 825.

better for him and for Lacedaemon if they ceased from warring against Aphytis. And so Lysander raised the siege and induced the Lacaedomonians to worship the god still more»[8]. Spartan devotion to Zeus Ammon is confirmed by the two Laconian sanctuaries dedicated to the god: one was in Sparta, another in Gytheion[9].

With regard to Dodona, Spartan affection for the shrine of Zeus Dodonaeus is highlighted from the mid 6th century BC onwards by material and literary evidence.

Spartans at Dodona

Several Laconian offerings date to the second half of the 6th century BC. After Corinthian offerings, they are the second most-numerous group of 6th century votives. Like Corinthian dedications, Laconian artefacts were large bronze craters with a clear sympotic character. Most of the items are attachments of bronze cauldrons that decorated the rim: the most notable and impressive group is that of marching warriors[10]. On the basis of a stylistic analysis, Stibbe advanced the hypothesis that these cauldrons were not produced in Sparta, but at Dodona, where a mixed workshop of Corinthian and Laconian artists might have operated[11]. Such an opinion, altogether interesting and thought provoking, is not without its problems. First, as no

[8] For the special tie between Lysander and the oracle of Siwah, Parke 1967, pp. 210-211, pp. 219-221; Parke, Wormell 1956, pp. 204-205; Malkin 1990, pp. 541-545.

[9] Paus. III, 18, 3 and 21, 8. On the cult of Zeus Ammon in Laconia: Roscher 1886, coll. 283-291, especially 289; Wide 1893, pp. 263-264; Cook 1914, pp. 351-352; Classen 1959; Parke 1967 pp. 206-211 and pp. 219-222; Ghazal 1986, pp. 175-176; Zorat 1990, pp. 119-122; Malkin 1994, pp. 158-163; Richer 2012, p. 272; Struffolino 2012, pp. 200-203. A ram-headed herm portraying Zeus Ammon was also found at Passava, near Gytheion (Schröder 1904, pp. 21-24, fig. 1; Cook 1914, p. 351, fig. 272; Classen 1959, p. 351).

[10] There are at least five Laconian bronze warriors from the rims of cauldrons found in Dodona (Ioannina, AM 1411; Ioannina, AM 4914; Ioannina, AM 4914; Ioannina, AM 4915; Berlin, AM Misc. 10590). Traditionally, the bronze warrior Berlin, AM Misc. 7470 is believed to be from Dodona, but it was found in Taras (Williams 1996, pp. 11-15).

[11] Stibbe 2000, pp. 159-162; Stibbe 2006.

trace of workshops, slag and waste of metalworking has been found near the sanctuary, where did these artisans operate? Even admitting that archaeological excavations have missed or not yet found these workrooms, it would be surprising to find such ateliers of artisans and artists operating at Dodona already in the mid-6th century BC, when the growth and the catchment area of the sanctuary and, consequently, the clientele of these bronze workers was rather limited. If a Corinthian-Laconian workshop existed, it is more reasonable to locate it along the way to the shrine, perhaps in one of the Corinthian colonies in north-western Greece.

In any case, the hypothesis that the Laconian bronzes found at Dodona were produced in Sparta and delivered by Spartan pilgrims cannot be easily dismissed. In this respect, the dating of these large votives to the second half of the 6th century BC is particularly significant since it pertains to a period in which Laconian objects were no longer meant for trade, but only for internal consumption. From a survey of the distribution of Laconian items it emerges that contemporary Laconian bronze vases with similar warrior-shaped decorations on the rim are found exclusively in Laconia and in two sanctuaries known to have been beloved by the Spartans, i.e. Olympia and Samos[12]. The five warrior-statuettes found in Dodona, not necessarily belonging to the same cauldron, therefore might suggest that Spartans patronised the shrine from an early date. The peculiar iconographic types from Spartan workshops found at Dodona and their diffusion provide forceful evidence for a direct relationship between the places of production and of commission of the items, seemingly Sparta itself. By this line of reasoning, Laconian bronzes of other iconographic types, such as a Laco-

[12] Morgan 1990, pp. 1-67; Morgan 1993, pp. 18-44; Hodkinson 1998, pp. 94-108; Hodkinson 2000, pp. 271-302. Apart from Dodona, Laconian warrior bronze statuettes were found in Messenia (Herfort-Koch 1986, pp. 116-117, K134-135, pl. XIX, 5-7 and pl. XX, 1-2), at Olympia (Stibbe 2000, figs. 18-19), in Laconia (Stibbe 2000, figs. 20-22) and at Samos (Herfort-Koch 1986, p. 116 K 132, pl. XIX, 3-4).

nian running girl from a large crater[13], a statuette of Artemis[14] and statuettes of banqueters[15], all decorating large cauldrons, can be interpreted as having been commissioned by Spartans[16].

In either case, whether these objects were produced and acquired at Dodona, as Stibbe suggests, or in Sparta, as I prefer to think, their function as sympotic vessels, whose iconography was associated with Greek *élites*, and their inherent value as expensive items are not in question.

A later item, which deserves particular attention, is a bronze handle attachment from a *situla*, portraying Zeus Ammon (fig. 3), coming very likely from Dodona[17]. It measures 7.5 cm in length and it dates to c. 475-450 BC. Its remarkable similarity with one of the above-mentioned Laconian banqueters[18] suggests that this object is of Spartan production; the special Spartan devotion to Zeus Ammon is a further argument in support of this attribution. Moreover, this offering is particularly important because its dating in the 5th century gives greater continuity to the Spartan frequenting of Dodona, which literary evidence attests only from the end of the 5th century BC.

[13] Athens, NM 24. If, as it seems, there is a correspondence between the iconographic types portrayed in the votives and the gender of the devotees, the running girl raises the question of the gender of the Spartan(s) who offered this cauldron at Dodona. For the sake of argument, we might interpret this isolated item, i.e. the running girl, as a votive donated either by a Spartan woman or by someone from her family, perhaps after an athletic competition; in this way, we can broaden the gender, but not the socio-economic spectrum, of the Spartans visiting Dodona. Spartan women were engaged in athletics, and those belonging to the royal houses could even enter horses at pan-Hellenic competitions and dedicate votives to commemorate their victories, as the Spartan Cynisca at Olympia (Paus. V, 12, 1 and *IvO* 160).

[14] Berlin, AM Misc. 7971.

[15] Ioannina, AM 4910 and London, BM 1954.10-18-1.

[16] On the Spartan *élite* and Spartan equestrian competition abroad, Hodkinson 2000, pp. 294-298, pp. 307-312 and pp. 409-412.

[17] Louvre Br. 4235; Chamoux 1953, p. 336; Parke 1967, p. 208, p. 277 no. 8, pl. IV; Leclant, Clerc 1981, *I*, *1*, p. 677 no. 88 and *I*, *2*, p. 546; Ghazal 1986, p. 175. According to information Parke gained from J. Charbonneaux, the then director of the Louvre, the item was acquired by purchase in the 1920s and its exact provenance is unproved; however, «it was believed at that time to be from Dodona, and the probability is strongly reinforced by the smooth green patina which covers the bronze completely», a feature which is a notable characteristic of all the bronzes from the site (Parke 1967, p. 208).

[18] London, BM 1954.10-18-1.

Fig. 3. Ram-horned Zeus Ammon from a bronze *situla* (Louvre Br 4235)

The first piece of literary evidence concerning a Spartan consultation regards Lysander and his plot to bring about a constitutional change. According to Ephorus, Lysander tried to modify the Spartan constitution by removing power from the hands of the Agiads and Eurypontids, who held the diarchy[19]. First, Lysander, according to Ephorus, planned to convince

[19] Ephorus *FGrHist* 70 F 207; Lysandr./Cleon *FGrHist* 583 T 1 a-c (= Diod. XIV, 13, 2; Plut., *Lys.* XXIV, 4 and XXX, 3); cf. also Cic., *De div.* I, 96 On the relationship between Ephorus and Cleon, Angeli Bertinelli, Manfredini, Piccirilli, Pisani 1997, pp. 277-278. Both the dating (either 403 or 396 BC) and the aim of Lysander's plot (transformation of the diarchy from a hereditary to an elective office or its abolition) are controversial, Angeli Bertinelli, Manfredini, Piccirilli, Pisani 1997, pp. 277-278.

the Spartans through a speech composed by Cleon of Halicarnassus, but later he understood that the institutional change was so exceptional that he would require an even stronger and more decisive support. For this reason, he thought to use the oracles as an instrument of persuasion[20]. First, he went to Delphi and tried to bribe the Pythia, aware of her decisive influence on the Spartan people. The attempt was unsuccessful, so he went to Dodona in order to persuade the priestesses through the help of a certain Pherecles[21]. Even this second attempt failed. With the same purpose in mind, he went last to the oracle of Siwah in Libya, where during a meeting with the priests he offered them, according to Plutarch, much money[22]. In spite of his generous offer, the priests sent messengers to Sparta to denounce Lysander. He was, later, put on trial and absolved[23]. Ancient sources do not record the reactions of the priestesses of Delphi and Dodona.

[20] Ephorus *FGrHist* 70 F 206 (= Plut., *Lys.* XXV, 3); Diod. XIV, 13, 3-5; Nep., *Lys.* III, 2. On the strong influence of religion, especially oracles and omens, on Spartan society and politics after Parker's 1989 seminal work, Powell 2010; Richer 2012, pp. 271-307.

[21] Pherecles is the name in Ephorus (*FGrHist* 70 F 206). In Diodorus' account the man is called Pherecrates and is from Apollonia (Diod. Sic. XIV, 13, 4). Of the two names, Φερεκράτης and Φερεκλῆς, the first is more popular than the second in north Greece, but neither is attested in Apollonia or any other Corinthian colony of the area. Φερεκράτης: *LGPN* I (5); II (4); III.A (2); III.B (8); IV (1); Φερεκλῆς: *LGPN* I (11); II (10); III.A (1); III.B (1); IV (3); V.A (4); V.B (6). According to Plutarch (*Mor.* 208F-209A), king Agesilaus also consulted Zeus of Dodona before the war against the Persians in 396 BC: after having consulted the oracle, Agesilaus reported the favourable answer to the ephors, who needed a stronger opinion before giving their assent to the war, because they sent Agesilaus to Delphi to seek Apollo's opinion as well (Parke, Wormell 1956, p. 75). The king asked Apollo Pythios if he agreed with his father. Plutarch reports in another passage a variation of the same oracular consultation (Plut., *Mor.* 191B): the characters and the historical background do not change, but the first oracle consulted is that of Olympia. Both *apophthegmata* referred to Agesilaus are modelled on Agesipolis' double consultation of the oracle of Olympia and Delphi before his campaign against Argos in 388 BC (Xen., *Hell.* IV, 7, 2-5; Giuliani 2001, p. 179 n. 2).

[22] This information, taken from Ephorus (*FGrHist* 70 F 206), seems to contradict Plutarch's previous words about the poverty of Lysander (Plut., *Lys.* II, 2-4; XXX, 5; Plut., *Mor.* 230 A). However Plutarch also writes that at Delphi Lysander had a deposit consisting of a talent of silver, and fifty-two minas, and eleven staters besides (Plut., *Lys.* XVIII, 3).

[23] Bommerlaer 1981, pp. 157-160.

The historicity of Lysander's attempt to bribe the oracles was questioned by Flower[24]. He states that the accounts of Plutarch and Diodorus[25], which differ in a few details, raise several issues. One is that the speech written by Cleon of Halicarnassus to persuade the Lacedemonians and found by king Agesilaus in Lysander's house could not have revealed any specific detail of the plot, if its main purpose was to persuade the Spartans. Moreover it is implausible that Lysander did not destroy the incriminating evidence of his conspiracy when the plan failed. Someone who was «generally ignorant of Spartan institutions», at least in some aspects, must have invented the story[26]. The Spartan state experienced many episodes of bribery of oracles, such as those supposedly instigated by Cleomenes I and Pleistonax[27], and it was not difficult to believe that a Spartan leader could have approached the most famous shrines of the Greek world as a result of personal ambition. If Flower is right, Lysander's plot is probably a story invented by his enemies soon after his death. The involvement of three most important oracles, Delphi, Dodona and Siwah, was useful to stress the political threat. On the other hand, if Flower is wrong, Lysander's attempt to bribe the oracles shows the degree of his desperation and hunger for power. In either case, whether Lysander's plot was invented or a real, the fact that literary tradition attests to the consultation of Siwah and Dodona, in addition to Delphi, indicates that Spartans were familiar with these oracles.

[24] Flower 1991, pp. 81-83; Flower 1994, p. 188.

[25] Lysandr./Cleon *FGrHist* 583 T 1 a-c. (= Diod. XIV, 13, 2; Plut., *Lys*. XXIV, 4 and XXX, 3).

[26] Flower 1991, p. 83.

[27] Hdt. VI, 66 (Cleomenes I); Hdt. V, 63 and Thuc. V, 16, 2-3 (Pleistonax).

The circumstances of the second consultation are reported by Diodorus[28], in a passage based very likely on Ephorus[29], in which he writes about the battle fought by Spartans, Arcadians, Argives, and Messenians in 368 BC. Diodorus reports that ten thousand Arcadians died, but no Spartans. He also claims, and it is the only source to do so, that the priestesses of Dodona predicted the "tearless battle"[30] – πόλεμος οὗτος Λακεδαιμονίοις ἄδακρυς ἔσται. From Diodorus' words we cannot establish if the Spartans consulted the oracle of Dodona before the expedition, since it remains possible that they had done so at some earlier point in time, and that after the "tearless battle" they connected the earlier oracular answer to this particular event.

Finally, according to Callisthenes[31], the Spartans asked the opinion of Zeus of Dodona about the outcome of the battle of

[28] Diod. Sic. XV, 72, 3: μετ' ὀλίγον δὲ χρόνον Λακεδαιμονίοις πρὸς Ἀρκάδας ἐγένετο μεγάλη μάχη, ἐν ᾗ ἐνίκησαν Λακεδαιμόνιοι ἐπιφανῶς. μετὰ γὰρ τὴν ἐν Λεύκτροις ἧτταν τοῦτο πρῶτον αὐτοῖς παράδοξον εὐτύχημα ἐγένετο· ἔπεσον γὰρ Ἀρκάδων μὲν ὑπὲρ τοὺς μυρίους, Λακεδαιμονίων δ' οὐδείς. προεῖπον δ' αὐτοῖς αἱ Δωδωνίδες ἱέρειαι, διότι πόλεμος οὗτος Λακεδαιμονίοις ἄδακρυς ἔσται – «Shortly after this the Lacedaemonians fought a great battle with the Arcadians and defeated them signally. Indeed since the defeat at Leuctra this was their first stroke of good fortune, and it was a surprising one; for over ten thousand Arcadians fell and not one Lacedaemonian. The priestesses of Dodona had foretold to them that this war would be a tearless one for the Lacedaemonians» (transl. C.H. Oldfather).

[29] Stylianou 1998, p. 472 suggests that Diodorus migh have used both Ephorus and a chronographic source.

[30] Other sources for the battle are Xen., *Hell.* VII, 1, 28-32 and Plut. *Ages.*, XXXIII, 3.

[31] Callisth. *FGrHist* 124 F 22a (= Cic., *De div.* I, 74-76): Quid? Lacedaemoniis paulo ante Leuctricam calamitatem quae significatio facta est, cum in Herculis fano arma sonuerunt Herculisque simulacrum multo sudore manavit! At eodem tempore Thebis, ut ait Callisthenes, in templo Herculis valvae clausae repagulis subito se ipsae aperuerunt, armaque, quae fixa in parietibus fuerant, ea sunt humi inventa. Cumque eodem tempore apud Lebadiam Trophonio res divina fieret, gallos gallinaceos in eo loco sic adsidue canere coepisse, ut nihil intermitterent; tum augures dixisse Boeotios Thebanorum esse victoriam, propterea quod avis illa victa siliere soleret, canere, si vicisset. Eademque tempestate multis signis Lacedaemoniis Leuctricae pugnae calamitas denuntiabatur. Namque et in Lysandri, qui Lacedaemoniorum clarissumus fuerat, statua, quae Delphis stabat, in capite corona subito exstitit ex asperis herbis et agrestibus, stellaeque aureae quae Delphis erant a Lacedaemoniis positae post navalem illam victoriam Lysandri qua Athenienses conciderunt, qua in pugna quia Castor et Pollux cum Lacedaemoniorum classe visi esse dicebantur, – eorum insignia deorum, stellae aureae, quas dixi, Delphis positae, paulo ante Leuctricam pugnam deciderunt neque repertae sunt. Maximum vero illud portentum isdem Spartiatis fuit,

Leuctra in 371 BC. Xenophon and later sources[32] report that about ten thousand Spartans were confronted by six thousand Boeotian soldiers led by Epaminondas. In spite of the inferior number, Epaminondas defeated the Spartan army. According to Callisthenes, before the war Spartan messengers were sent to Dodona to enquire whether Sparta would win the battle: they put down a box containing the lots, but the pet monkey of the king of the Molossians jumbled up the *sortes*[33]. The priestess in charge said that the Spartans would have to think about safety,

quod, cum oraclum ab love Dodonaeo petivissent de victoria sciscitantes legatique [vas] illud in quo inerant sortes collocavissent, simia, quam rex Molossorum in deliciis habebat, et sortes ipsas et cetera quae erant ad sortem parata disturbavit et aliud alio dissupavit, Tum ea, quae praeposita erat oraclo, sacerdos dixisse dicitur de salute Lacedaemoniis esse, non de victoria cogitandum – «Again: what a warning was given to the Spartans just before the disastrous battle of Leuctra, when the armour clanked in the temple of Heracles and his statue dripped with sweat! But at the same time, according to Callisthenes, the folding doors of Heracles' temple at Thebes, though closed with bars, suddenly opened of their own accord, and the armour which had been fastened on the temple walls, was found on the floor. And, at the same time, at Lebadia, in Boeotia, while divine honours were being paid to Trophonios, the cocks in the neighbourhood began to crow vigorously and did not leave off. Thereupon the Boeotian augurs declared that the victory belonged to the Thebans, because it was the habit of cocks to keep silence when conquered and to crow when victorious. The Spartans received many warnings given at that time of their impending defeat at Leuctra. For example, a crown of wild, prickly herbs suddenly appeared on the head of the statue erected at Delphi in honour of Lysander, the most eminent of the Spartans. Furthermore, the Spartans had set up some golden stars in the temple of Castor and Pollux at Delphi to commemorate the glorious victory of Lysander over the Athenians, because, it was said, those gods were seen accompanying the Spartan fleet in that battle. Now, just before the battle of Leuctra these divine symbols — that is, the golden stars at Delphi, already referred to — fell down and were never seen again. But the most significant warning received by the Spartans was this: they sent to consult the oracle of Zeus at Dodona as to the chances of victory. After their messengers had duly set up the vessel in which were the lots, an ape, kept by the king of Molossia for his amusement, disarranged the lots and everything else used in consulting the oracle, and scattered them in all directions. Then, so we are told, the priestess who had charge of the oracle said that the Spartans must think of safety and not of victory» (transl. W.A. Falconer). Cf. Prandi 1985, pp. 45-47.

[32] Xen., *Hell.* VI, 4, 3-15; Diod. Sic. XV, 53-56; Plut., *Pelop*. XX-XXIII; Paus. IX, 13, 2-10.

[33] Different methods of divination are attested at Dodona (Piccinini 2013b, pp. 66-68; Parker 2015). Literary sources attest several divinatory practices: the oracular answer was given through the rustling of the leaves of the sacred oak or by the flight of doves (Strabo VII, 7 fr. 2, C 329) or by the murmuring of the water of a fountain (Pomp. Mela II, 37; Lucr. VI, 879-889; Plin., *N.H.* II, 228) or through *sortes* [Callisth. *FGrHist* 124 F 22a (= Cic., *De div*. I, 74-76); Hdt. II, 53, 3; Lhôte 2006, no. 95].

not about their victory – *tum ea quae praeposita erat oraculo sacerdos dixisse dicitur de salute Lacedaimonis esse, non de victoria cogitandum*. The authenticity of this account may be supported by the chronological proximity of Callisthenes to the event, by the description of the oracular method (*sortes*) and by the peculiar detail of the monkey disturbing the divination[34].

Spartan consultations reported by literary evidence, thus, concentrate between the end of the 5th and the first quarter of the 4th centuries BC. If the historicity of Lysander's consultation is debatable and that of the "tearless battle" is uncertain, the one preceding the battle of Leuctra in 371 BC can be regarded as genuine. In any case what is important is that literary sources place Dodona among the oracular shrines that Spartans consulted or were likely to consult in those years.

The oracular tablets confirm that private individuals from Laconia and Messenia went to Dodona in the 4th century BC. Leaving aside a 4th century BC tablet with the name Λάκων[35], apparently evocative of a regional origin, but well attested also outside Peloponnese, other individuals from Laconia and Messenia consulted the oracle for residential matters[36]. In one case[37], the provenance of the consultant is deduced from the onomastics, i.e. Βρασίδας, whose evocative name is strongly tied with Spartan history[38]:

Βρ[α]σίδας ἐπερωτῆ
Δί[α καὶ Δι]ώναν ἦ
Ε[- - - - - - - -]Ε[- -]Κ[-]
ἐνδατίσαι[39].

«Brasidas asks Zeus and Dione whether […] live».

In the other two cases, the origin of the consultants, whose names are not preserved, is suggested by the toponyms, Sellasia

34 Parke 1967, p. 109.
35 DVC 4113B.
36 *LGPN I* (9); *II* (16); *III.A* (19); *III.B* (6); *IV* (4); *V* (12).
37 DVC 3310B.
38 *LGPN III.A* (8); *V* (1).
39 The verb should be ἐνδιαιτῆσαι, meaning "to dwell, live", epigraphically found only in a Spartan inscription (*IG* V, 1 6).

and Thouria, respectively in Laconia and Messenia[40]. In both cases an individual asked the oracle of Zeus whether he should stay there:

- [- - -ἐ]ν Σελ̣(λ)ασί[αι - - -][41] – «[…] in Sellasia […]»;
- εἰ ἐν ταῖ Θ[ο]υρία μένε̄ν[42] – «[…] whether stay in Thouria».

Admittedly, there might be the possibility that those consulting the god(s) were only temporary residents, perhaps engaged in commercial activities there, but for the present investigation what matters is the geographical origin of the consultants.

In conclusion, Spartans are likely to have visited Dodona from the second half of the 6th century BC onwards. The growing Spartan austerity after the archaic period might have contributed to the paucity of material evidence testifying to Spartan interest in Dodona[43]; the lack of Spartan offerings does not necessarily imply a lack of Spartan consultations. Likewise, the presence of Spartan devotees at Dodona only in the 4th century BC, as attested epigraphically, might have to do with the Laconian limited use of writing for private and public purposes[44] or more generally on the dearth of Laconian inscriptions.

The Reasons for a Choice

Besides Delphi and Olympia, in the 6th century BC Spartans began to frequent other shrines, Zeus Ammon at Siwah and Zeus Dodonaeus at Dodona *in primis*. If the Spartans had become acquainted with Siwah after the foundation of Cyrene

[40] *Inventory*, pp. 586-587 and *Inventory*, pp. 565-566.

[41] DVC 2416A, which is perhaps connected to DVC 2415A, containing the name of the consultant, Μνασικλῆς, by all means not particularly revealing, *LGPN I* (7); *II* (4); *III.A* (12); *III.B* (8), and to DVC 2419B, the answer of the oracle.

[42] DVC 2554B.

[43] Dickins 1908; Wade Gery 1925; Ehrenberg 1929, coll. 1379-1453; Holladay 1977; Cartledge 1979, p. 156; Förtsch 1998. A more cautious approach by Hodkinson 2000, pp. 271-302.

[44] Spartan literacy is a controversial topic: Cartledge 1978; Boring 1979; Thomas 1992, p. 131; Andreev 1994-1995; Whitley 1997, pp. 645-649; Millender 2001; Nafissi 2013, p. 117.

(c. 630 BC)[45], a colony of Thera which claimed Spartan origin[46], the context in which they developed an interest in Dodona and the reasons behind their attraction to this sanctuary are more problematic and less evident.

At the beginning of the 6th century BC, apart from the local populations Dodona had a limited catchment area: besides the Euboeans, the Corinthians were the only non-Epirote visitors to the shrine. Corinthian economic and colonial activities in north-western Greece made the sanctuary part of an intricate network of exchanges, which contributed to increase the popularity of the shrine and made it emerge from a mere local context, acquiring a more interregional dimension[47].

The first attested Spartan dedications date to the mid-6th century BC, when the Corinthian frequentation of Dodona was already secured[48]. It might be not too hazardous, then, to suggest that the Spartans started visiting the shrine as a consequence of the Corinthian presence. Up to the mid 6th century BC the Corinthians were for the Spartans not only carriers of Laconian goods in the Mediterranean (namely to Egypt, Sicily and Magna Graecia)[49], but also potential allies for the constitution of the so-called Peloponnesian League, which emerged in c. 550 and in which Sparta was the hegemonic power[50].

[45] Parke 1967, pp. 209-211; Zorat 1990, p. 119 n. 155.

[46] Hdt. IV, 147-149; Pind., *Pyth*. IV, 251-259 and V, 72-79; Paus. III, 1, 7-8; Malkin 1994, pp. 89-111.

[47] See pp. 61-72.

[48] The first Corinthian objects at Dodona date to the end of the 8th century BC (p. 63).

[49] The identity of the carriers of Laconian products in the Mediterranean up to the mid 6th century BC is very controversial: Nafissi 1989, pp. 72-75; Nafissi 1991, pp. 253-276, part. pp. 255-256 n. 72; Hodkinson 2000, p. 271; Coudin 2009, pp. 45-46. Although the great majority of scholars believe that Laconian bronzes, along with pottery, were distributed by the Samians, at least until ca. 525 BC (Lane 1933-1934, p. 179; Boardman 1964, p. 141; Jeffery 1976, p. 217; Cartledge 1982, pp. 256-258; Asheri, Medaglia 1990, p. 265), owing to Samian-Spartan *philia* between c. 650 and 525 BC (Hdt. I, 79; III, 47), Nafissi pointed out that «merchants from Tarentum, Corinth, Cyrene, Cnidus or Samos, as well as *Periokoi*, have at times been thought to be responsible for the trade in Laconian pottery», concluding that «this question is obviously complex and certainly cannot be explained by ascribing all trade in Laconian to merchants from a single city» (Nafissi 1989, p. 72; Nafissi 1991, pp. 255-256).

[50] Cartledge 1979, pp. 131-159.

Spartans might have first got in contact with Dodona through the Corinthians, perhaps in the context of their trading activities. Later, from the mid-6th century BC, they exploited the shrine as a showcase to exhibit their power, prestige and wealth, especially in front of potential allies. Dodona might have been one of those sanctuaries, according to Hodkinson, the wealthy and powerful Spartiates, i.e. the ruling class, used to advance their reputation by making expenditures on an exalted scale not possible at home[51] and, thus, the ideal place to establish and/or consolidate alliances, in this specific case with the Corinthians.

In the course of the centuries Spartans continued to visit the shrine, as the mid-5th century BC *situla* and literary evidence show. Spartan growing devotion to Zeus Ammon, with whom Zeus Dodonaeus shared its *Gründungslegend*, might have cemented their tie with Dodona.

[51] Hodkinson 2000, pp. 294-298. Further support for this proposition comes from the observation that the dedication of large and rich votives was a phenomenon confined to a wealthy few, not to the mass of Spartiates, who kept on offering in Laconian sanctuaries.

Chapter 6

Between Boeotia and Thessaly

The Boeotians at Dodona

From the mid-5th century BC, a Boeotian presence at Dodona is variously attested by literary and epigraphic evidence. The corpus of oracular tablets testifies to very few Boeotian consultations[1], the most interesting of which is by two Boeotian women, Boukolò and Polymnaste, who consulted the oracle of Zeus together about their offspring[2]:

Θιός· τύχα ἀγαθά· ⋮ Βουκολώ κὴ Πολυμνάστη
τί κα δράοντοιν hυγία κὴ γενιὰ κ᾽ ἀνδρογένεια
γινύο[ι]το ϙὴ παραμόνιμος ἰοιὸ[ς] ϙὴ χρεμάτων
ἐπιγγ[ύ]ασις ϙὴ τῶν ἰόντων ὄνασις[3].

«God. Good luck. Boukolò and Polymnaste (ask) what they should do for there to be health and have offspring and a male child from their husband that will survive and security of (their) properties and what they have shall prosper».

Both women, whose Boeotian provenance is inferred by the dialect of the inscription and the onomastics[4], were concerned

[1] Lhôte 2006, no. 133A and no. 149 (*contra* Mendez Dosuna 2007). Also Mendez Dosuna 2007, p. 137, no. 4157A of the 4th century BC and a Boeotian/Thessalian tablet of the late 4th century BC, Mendez Dosuna 2007, p. 135, no. 3114B.

[2] Eidinow 2007, p. 92 no. 13; Mendez Dosuna 2016, pp. 123-124 no. 313A; Piccinini 2015a.

[3] *SEG* LVII, 536 (translation on the base of Chaniotis' notes).

[4] Both names are never attested, but the co-radical names of Boukolò are in Boeotia as Βουκολέων *LGPN* III.A (1), Βουκολίων *LGPN* I (1) and III.A (1), Βουκολίς *LGPN* III.B (1), Βουκόλις *LGPN* IV (1) and V.A (1), Βούκολος *LGPN* I (3), Βουκόλος *LGPN* II (2), III.A (5) and V.B (1).

about the possibility of losing their socio-economic status, perhaps as a consequence of being not able to conceive children from their respective husbands.

Besides private consultations, attested epigraphically, the most relevant event is a *theoria*, which will be discussed in the following pages[5].

The Tripodephoria *of the Boeotians*

The *theoria* was more precisely a *tripodephoria*: every year a tripod was stolen overnight from a Boeotian shrine[6], covered with a cloth and delivered to the sanctuary of Zeus Dodonaeus in Epirus. The ritual has been an object of scholarly debate, both in terms of its meaning and in relation to a fragment of Pindar (fr. 59)[7].

The full account of this ritual performance is in Ephorus, quoted by Strabo[8], who reports the mythic-historical circumstances bringing about the *theoria*. The most ancient reference to the event that underlies the rite is, however, a fragment of

[5] A local tradition attested only by Pausanias (IX, 8, 1), who in this respect is rather sceptical, also testifies to ties between the oracle of Zeus and the Boeotians, but its dating is problematic: διαβεβηκότι δὲ ἤδη τὸν Ἀσωπὸν καὶ τῆς πόλεως δέκα μάλιστα ἀφεστηκότι σταδίους Ποτνιῶν ἐστιν ἐρείπια καὶ ἐν αὐτοῖς ἄλσος Δήμητρος καὶ Κόρης. τὰ δὲ ἀγάλματα ἐν τῷ ποταμῷ τῷ παρὰ τὰς Ποτνιὰς ** τὰς θεὰς ὀνομάζουσιν. ἐν χρόνῳ δὲ εἰρημένῳ δρῶσι καὶ ἄλλα ὁπόσα καθέστηκέ σφισι καὶ ἐς τὰ μέγαρα καλούμενα ἀφιᾶσιν ὗς τῶν νεογνῶν: τοὺς δὲ ὗς τούτους ἐς τὴν ἐπιοῦσαν τοῦ ἔτους ὥραν ἐν Δωδώνῃ φασὶν ἐπὶ *** λόγῳ τῷδε ἄλλος πού τις πεισθήσεται – «Across the Asopos, about ten stades distant from the city, are the ruins of Potniae, in which there is a grove of Demeter and Kore. The images at the river that flows past Potniae. . . they name the goddesses. At an appointed time they perform their accustomed ritual, one part of which is to let loose young pigs into what are called *megara*. At the same time the following year these pigs appear, they say, in Dodona. This story others can believe if they wish».

[6] Although no evidence indicates from what Boeotian sanctuary the tripod was taken, the great majority of modern scholars believe that it came from the sanctuary of Apollo Ismenion (Schachter 1981, p. 83; D'Alessio 1997, pp. 45-46; Olivieri 2011, p. 195; Parmeggiani 2011, p. 210 n. 259 *contra* Filoni 2007, p. 78). According to Ganter 2013, p. 97, the tripod was from the sanctuary of Athena Itonia.

[7] Kowalzig 2007; Moscati Castelnuovo 2017.

[8] Ephorus *FGrHist* 70 F 119 (= Strabo IX, 2, 4, C 402).

Euripides' *Erechtheus*[9], referring to the μίασμα δρυός, «the pollution of the tree»[10], that is to say, the contamination of the sacred oak, standing in this case as *pars pro toto* for the sanctuary of Dodona. The sacrilege was committed by the Thebans according to the paroemiographic tradition that reports Euripides' fragment[11], and the connection between the Thebans and Dodona is confirmed by the exegesis of another proverb – Βοιωτοῖς μαντεύσαις, «prophesy to the Boeotians»[12], according to which the Boeotians threw the prophetess of Dodona into a cauldron because she had fallen in love with one of the *theoroi*. According to Moscati Castelnuovo[13], the story must have already been well known to the Attic audience for it to be included in Euripides' *Erechtheus*, which was performed at the Dionysia in 423/2 BC[14].

A more detailed narration of the sacrilege is in Ephorus, where the account works as a double *aition*, giving a reason, on the one hand, for the annual ritual of the Boeotian tripod procession to Dodona, and on the other for the custom of delivering oracles to the Boeotians by priests, and not priestesses.

[9] Eurip., *Erechth*. fr. 368 (Kannicht), transmitted both indirectly through the paroemiographic tradition [*App. Prov*. III, 97 (CPG I, 434, 15)] and directly in a papyrus (Austin 1968, p. 31 fr. 59). Also Sonnino 2010, pp. 218-223.

[10] The reference to the oracle of Dodona in the Euripidean fragment is assured by another fragment (Eurip., *Erechth*. fr. 367 Kannicht), which evidently mentions the priests of Zeus Dodonaeus: ἐν ἀστρώτῳ πέδῳ / εὕδουσι, πηγαῖς δ' οὐχ ὑγραίνουσιν πόδας – «they sleep on uncovered ground and do not wet their feet with water» (as Hom., *Il*. XVI, 233-235).

[11] *App. Prov*. III, 97 (CPGI, 434, 15): Μίασμα δρυός: παρ' Εὐριπίδῃ ἐν Ἐρεχθεῖ αἰνιττόμενον τὸ Θηβαίων παρανόμημα εἰς τὸ ἐν Δωδώνῃ μαντεῖον, ἀφ' οὗ καὶ παροιμία Βοιωτοῖς μαντεύσαις. ** ἠσέβησαν γὰρ εἰς τὴν ἱέρειαν ἐμβαλόντες αὐτὴν εἰς τὸν ἐν Δωδώνῃ λέβητα ζέοντα, ἐρωτικῶς διατεθεῖσαν εἰς ἕνα τῶν θεωρῶν.

[12] Zenob. II, 84; also *Suda* s.v. Μυίας δάκρυον: διὰ τὴν Θηβαίων παρανομίαν εἰς τὸ ἐν Δωδώνῃ μαντεῖον: ἀφ' οὗ εἴρηται καὶ τό, παρὰ Βοιωτοῖς μαντεύσαιο. ἠσέβησαν γὰρ καὶ οὗτοι εἰς τὴν ἱέρειαν ἐμβαλόντες αὐτὴν εἰς τὸν ἐν Δωδώνῃ λέβητα, ἐρωτικῶς διατεθεῖσαν εἰς ἕνα τῶν θεωρῶν. On the text in the *Suda*: Theodoridis 1974.

[13] Moscati Castelnuovo 2017.

[14] The tragedy was represented in 423/2 BC (Plut., *Nik*. IX, 5; Calder 1969; Di Benedetto 1971, pp. 154-155; Mette 1981-1982, p. 117; Sonnino 2010, pp. 27-34).

According to Ephorus[15], sixty years after the Trojan war,

[15] Ephorus *FGrHist* 70 F 119 (= Strabo IX, 2, 4, C 402 Radt): φησὶ δ' Ἔφορος τοὺς μὲν Θρᾶικας ποιησαμένους σπονδὰς πρὸς τοὺς Βοιωτοὺς ἐπιθέσθαι νύκτωρ στρατοπεδεύουσιν ὀλιγωρότερον ὡς εἰρήνης γεγονυίας· διακρουσαμένων δ' αὐτοὺς αἰτιωμένων τε ἅμα, ὅτι τὰς σπονδὰς παρέβαινον, μὴ παραβῆναι φάσκειν ἐκείνους· συνθέσθαι γὰρ ἡμέρας, νύκτωρ δ' ἐπιθέσθαι· ἀφ' οὗ δὴ καὶ τὴν παροιμίαν εἰρῆσθαι 'Θραικία παρεύρεσις'. τοὺς δὲ Πελασγοὺς μένοντος ἔτι τοῦ πολέμου χρηστηριασομένους ἀπελθεῖν εἰς Δωδώνην, ἀπελθεῖν δὲ καὶ τοὺς Βοιωτούς. τὸν μὲν οὖν τοῖς Πελασγοῖς δοθέντα χρησμὸν ἔφη μὴ ἔχειν εἰπεῖν, τοῖς δὲ Βοιωτοῖς ἀνελεῖν τὴν προφῆτιν, ἀσεβήσαντας εὖ πράξειν. τοὺς δὲ θεωροὺς ὑπονοήσαντας χαριζομένην τοῖς Πελασγοῖς τὴν προφῆτιν κατὰ τὸ συγγενές, ἐπειδὴ καὶ τὸ ἱερὸν Πελασγικὸν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπῆρξεν, οὕτως ἀνελεῖν, ἁρπάσαντας τὴν ἄνθρωπον εἰς πυρὰν ἐμβαλεῖν, ἐνθυμηθέντας εἴτε κακουργήσασαν εἴτε μὴ πρὸς ἀμφότερα ὀρθῶς ἔχειν, εἰ μὲν παρεχρηστηρίασε κολασθείσης αὐτῆς, εἰ δ' οὐδὲν ἐκακούργησε τὸ προσταχθὲν αὐτῶν πραξάντων. τοὺς δὲ περὶ τὸ ἱερὸν τὸ μὲν ἀκρίτους κτείνειν τοὺς πράξαντας, καὶ ταῦτ' ἐν ἱερῷ, μὴ δοκιμάσαι, καθιστάναι δ' εἰς κρίσιν, καλεῖν δ' ἐπὶ τὰς ἱερείας· ταύτας δ' εἶναι τὰς προφήτιδας, αἳ λοιπαὶ τριῶν οὐσῶν περιῆσαν. λεγόντων δ', ὡς οὐδαμοῦ νόμος εἴη δικάζειν γυναῖκας, προσελέσθαι καὶ ἄνδρας ἴσους ταῖς γυναιξὶ τὸν ἀριθμόν. τοὺς μὲν οὖν ἄνδρας ἀπογνῶναι, τὰς δὲ γυναῖκας καταγνῶναι, ἴσων δὲ τῶν ψήφων γενομένων τὰς ἀπολυούσας νικῆσαι· ἐκ δὲ τούτων Βοιωτοῖς μόνοις ἄνδρας προθεσπίζειν ἐν Δωδώνηι. τὰς μέντοι προφήτιδας ἐξηγουμένας τὸ μαντεῖον εἰπεῖν, ὅτι προστάττοι ὁ θεὸς τοῖς Βοιωτοῖς, τοὺς παρ' αὐτοῖς τρίποδας συλώντας εἰς Δωδώνην πέμπειν κατ' ἔτος. καὶ δὴ καὶ ποιεῖν τοῦτο· αἰεὶ γάρ τινα τῶν ἀνακειμένων τριπόδων νύκτωρ καθαιροῦντας καὶ κατακαλύπτοντας ἱματίοις ὡς ἂν λάθρα τριποδηφορεῖν εἰς Δωδώνην – «Ephorus says that the Thracians made a treaty with the Boeotians and then fell upon them by night whilst they, under the impression that peace had been made, were negligently encamped. The Boeotians drove them off and at the same time accused them of having broken the treaty, but they said that they had not, for the treaty had stated "by day", whereas they had attacked during the night. From this the saying arose "a Thracian pretext". Now the Pelasgians, since the war was still going on, went to consult the oracle, and the Boeotians went too. Ephorus states that he cannot tell what response was given to the Pelasgians, but that the prophetess answered the Boeotians that they would have success after they had done an impious deed. Now the Boeotian ambassadors had a suspicion that the prophetess had replied in this way because she favoured the Pelasgians by reason of kinship since the temple too had been Pelasgian originally. So the ambassadors laid hands on the woman and threw her onto the fire reasoning that whether or not she had committed a wicked deed, they were in either case acting correctly: if she had spoken a false oracle, then she had been punished; and if she had done nothing wrong, then they had only acted as instructed. Now the people who administered the temple did not approve of killing the perpetrators without trial, and in the temple too, so they put these men on trial and summoned them to the priestesses. Now these were the prophetesses who remained of the original three. But when the Boeotians said that women were nowhere allowed to be judges, they selected men also, equal in number to the women. Now the men voted "not guilty", but the women "guilty", and since the votes were equal, those in favour of acquitting prevailed. Because of these things only the Boeotians receive oracles from men at Dodona. Now the prophetesses, in explanation of the oracle, say that the god meant for the Boeotians to steal tripods in Boeotia and to send one to Dodona each

at the time of the Aeolian migration from Aulis to Asia[16], the Boeotians attempted to return to their homeland in Boeotia from Thessaly, where the Thracians and Pelasgians had previously pushed them. With the help of the inhabitants of Orchomenos, which had just been added to their territory, they strove to press the Pelasgians into Athens and the Thracians into Mount Parnassos. Whilst the Thracians were defeated, the war with the Pelasgians continued, so that both parties, i.e. the Pelasgians and the Boeotians, went to consult the oracle of Dodona – τοὺς δὲ Πελασγοὺς μένοντος ἔτι τοῦ πολέμου χρηστηριασομένους ἀπελθεῖν εἰς Δωδώνην, ἀπελθεῖν δὲ καὶ τοὺς Βοιωτούς. The prophetess told the Boeotians that they «would prosper if they committed a sacrilege» – τοῖς δὲ Βοιωτοῖς ἀνελεῖν τὴν προφῆτιν, ἀσεβήσαντας εὖ πράξειν. The Boeotian messengers suspected that the oracle was favourable to the Pelasgians because of the oracle's kinship with them, «indeed the temple was from the beginning Pelasgian»[17] – τοὺς δὲ θεωροὺς ὑπονοήσαντας χαριζομένην τοῖς Πελασγοῖς τὴν προφῆτιν κατὰ τὸ συγγενές, ἐπειδὴ καὶ τὸ ἱερὸν Πελασγικὸν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπῆρξεν, οὕτως ἀνελεῖν. So the Boeotians seized the woman and threw her upon a burning pyre[18]. They reasoned that if she had uttered a false oracle, she deserved punishment, but if a true one, they would have obeyed it by committing sacrilege. Because of this extreme act, the messengers were then put on trial, but acquitted thanks to a positive vote by the male priests at Dodona[19]. In consequence, from that moment onwards, at Dodona prophecies to Boeotians were uttered by men only – ἐκ δὲ τούτων Βοιωτοῖς μόνοις ἄνδρας προθεσπίζειν ἐν Δωδώνηι; moreover, eventually, the surviving prophetess explained to the Boeotians the real meaning of the oracle, that was instructing them to steal tripods and send one of them to Dodona every year – τὰς μέντοι προφήτιδας ἐξηγουμένας τὸ μαντεῖον εἰπεῖν,

year; and what is more, they really do this. For they always take one of the dedicated tripods by night and, when they have covered it up with clothing, they, as though in secret, bring it to Dodona» [transl. V. Parker,"Ephorus" (70), in *BNJ*].

16 Cf. Thuc. I, 12, 3; VII, 57, 5; Paus. X, 8, 4.

17 Hom., *Il.* XVI, 233-236.

18 Not in boiling water, as in Zenobius (II, 84 = Heraclides Pont. fr. 136 Wehrli[2]).

19 At Dodona both priests and priestesses operated in the sanctuary (Hdt. II, 55, 3).

ὅτι προστάττοι ὁ θεὸς τοῖς Βοιωτοῖς, τοὺς παρ' αὐτοῖς τρίποδας συλώντας[20] εἰς Δωδώνην πέμπειν κατ' ἔτος.

The story is also reported by Proclus[21], who likely does not depend directly on Ephorus[22]. Proclus' version, despite its brevity, contains a few different, interesting details. In the first place Proclus says that a song, i.e. the *tripodephorikon melos*, accompanied the *tripodephoria*[23]. Moreover, he indicates that the oracle was consulted by the Thebans, not generically by Boeotians. Finally, and most interestingly, the passage explains that the Pelasgians, to be considered a prefiguration of the Athe-

[20] According to Radt's edition, followed by *BNJ*. Kowalzig 2007, p. 334 n. 12 agrees with Groskurd's *lectio*, συλήσαντας ἕνα «stole one», reported by Jones 1961, p. 286 n. 1.

[21] Procl. *Chrest*. 79-86 Severyns (*apud* Phot., *Bibl*. 321 b, 32-322a, 13): Τὸ δὲ τριποδηφορικὸν μέλος τρίποδος προηγουμένου παρὰ τοῖς Βοιωτοῖς ᾄδετο. Ἔσχε δὲ καὶ τοῦτο αἰτίαν τοιαύτην. Πελασγῶν τινες Πάνακτον τῆς Βοιωτίας ἐπόρθουν, Θηβαῖοι δὲ ἤμυνον· καὶ πέμψαντες εἰς Δωδώνην περὶ τῆς τοῦ πολέμου νίκης ἐχρῶντο. Χρησμὸς δὲ τοῖς Θηβαίοις ἐξέπεσεν ὡς, εἰ μέγιστον ἀσέβημα ἀσεβήσουσι, νικήσουσιν. Ἔδοξεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ἀσεβημάτων εἶναι μέγιστον τὸ τὴν χρησμῳδήσασαν αὐτοῖς τὸν χρησμὸν ἀνελεῖν, καὶ ἀνεῖλον. Αἱ δὲ περὶ τὸ τέμενος συνιέρειαι δίκην λαβεῖν ἀπῄτουν τοῦ φόνου τοὺς Θηβαίους. Θηβαῖοι δὲ οὐκ ἐπιτρέπουσι γυναιξὶ μόναις τὴν περὶ αὐτῶν δίκην ἀξιοῦν· κοινῆς δὲ κρίσεως ἀνδρῶν καὶ γυναικῶν γεγενημένης καὶ τῶν ἀνδρῶν λευκὰς αὐτοῖς ἐπενεγκόντων ψήφους ἀπέφυγον Θηβαῖοι. Ὕστερον δὲ ἐπιγνόντες αὐτοῖς τὸ ὑπὸ τοῦ χρησμοῦ προστασσόμενον βαστάσαντες τῶν κατὰ τὴν Βοιωτίαν ἱερῶν τριπόδων ἕνα καὶ κατακαλύψαντες ὡς ἱερόσυλοι ἀνέπεμψαν εἰς Δωδώνην. Εὐπραγήσαντες δὲ ἐξ ἐκείνου τοῦ λοιποῦ τὴν πρᾶξιν ἑορτὴν ἐποίουν – «The tripodephoric song was sang in Boeotia when a tripod was taken in procession. Here the origin of this custom. Some Pelasgians besieged Panacton in Boeotia, and the Thebans defended it, and sent a delegation to Dodona to consult the oracle on the victory of the war. The oracle answered the Thebans that they would have won if they had done the greatest sacrilege. It seems to them that the greatest sacrilege was to murder the one who had delivered them the oracle, and they killed her. The other priestesses of sacred place requested that the Thebans had to be punished for the murder. The Thebans did not permit that only women would have judged them. After having created a mixed court of men and women and the men had voted in their favour choosing white stones, the Thebans were acquitted. When later they understood what the oracle had ordered them, they stole one of the sacred tripods in Boeotia, by simulating a sacred theft, and sent it to Dodona. The action was successful and from then onwards they made a celebration».

[22] Moscati Castelnuovo 2017, p. 117.

[23] Also *Comm. In Dionys. Thr*. (Schol. Lond.), p. 450, 19-20 (Hilgard): Τριποδηφορικόν ἐστι τὸ ᾀδόμενον ἐπὶ προπομπῇ τρίποδος, ὃν ἔπεμπον οἱ Θηβαῖοι ἐξ ἔθους τῷ Διὶ τῷ Δωδωναίῳ εἰς Δωδώνην.

nians[24], and the Boeotians quarrelled and fought over a specific territory. While Ephorus, in saying that the Boeotians, helped by the Orchomenians, had driven the Pelasgians out – ἐξέβαλον –, implies that the Pelasgians were settled south of Orchomenos, Proclus is more precise, by indicating that the Pelasgians besieged the fortress of Panacton and the Thebans tried to defend it – Πελασγῶν τινες Πάνακτον τῆς Βοιωτίας ἐπόρθουν, Θηβαῖοι δὲ ἤμυνον.

The account of Proclus, who stresses some sort of ancient Boeotian right over Panacton, alludes to the events of the last quarter of the 5th century BC. Located in the area of the Cithaeron-Parnes range[25], dividing Attica from Boeotia, the fortress of Panacton, near the modern village of Prasino, on the southern edge of the Skourta plain was object of a long-lasting dispute between Athens and Boeotia[26]. Because of the numerous passages and roads along the Cithaeron-Parnes ridge, which directly connect Athens with Thebes, this contested area was a crucial place to control in minor and major conflicts[27]. According to Thucydides, «once in former times, there had been a quarrel over Panacton, oaths had been exchanged between Athenians and Boeotians that neither should inhabit the district, but they should graze it in common»[28]. Archaeological surveys in the area confirm that the territory was dotted with fortifications, but was not occupied between the 10th and mid-5th centuries BC when the Athenians built the fortress of Panacton[29]. During the Peloponnesian war in 422 BC the Boeotians conquered Panacton by treachery[30]. The Athenians claimed it back and the return

24 Thomas 2000, pp. 119-122; Parmeggiani 2011, pp. 209-212.

25 This continuous chain of mountains stretches from the head of the Corinthian Gulf to the Euripos, with the highest summit being around 1300m and the lower hilltops ranging from 750 to 910m.

26 Chandler 1926, pp. 6-7; Ober 1985, pp. 152-154; Prandi 1987; Daverio Rocchi 1988, pp. 180-181; Munn 1989, pp. 231-233; Munn 1996, pp. 47-58; Schachter 2016, pp. 91-92.

27 Munn 1989.

28 Thuc. V, 42, 1.

29 Munn 1989, pp. 242-244.

30 Thuc. V, 3, 5; Ober 1985, p. 192; Daverio Rocchi 1988, pp. 180-181; Hodkinson 1988, p. 51; Rood 1998, p. 106.

of the stronghold was one of the clauses in the peace of Nicias[31]; the Spartans, in the hope of recovering Pylos, sent envoys to the Boeotians to persuade them to deliver up the fort[32]. The Boeotians claimed a separate alliance with the Spartans and eventually in the spring of 422 BC started to demolish the fortress, before returning it to the Athenians[33].

Moscati Castelnuovo rightly points out that Euripides' reference to the μίασμα δρυός in 423/2, indeed, perfectly fits into this scenario[34]: if, on the one hand, the Boeotians claimed some rights over Panacton, the Athenians, by putting forward the accusation of sacrilege, challenged their claim. Moreover, this charge of impiety should be placed in the context of the mutual accusations between Boeotians and Athenians in the aftermath of the defeat suffered by the latter at Delium in 424 BC: the Boeotians accused the Athenians of having occupied illegally the sanctuary of Apollo; the Athenians, in turn, blamed the Boeotians for delaying the return the bodies of their dead[35].

As a response to the Athenian accusations, the Boeotians reaffirmed their ties with Dodona: whereas the tradition exploited by Euripides conveyed an image of Boeotians burdened with negative connotations in relation to their sacrilege at Dodona, the annual *tripodephoria*, performed by the Boeotians, worked as a sort of expiation rite, removing this infamous blot on the Boeotian past[36].

Such a ritual procession of the Boeotians at Dodona, thus, should be dated to the last quarter of the 5th century BC. At the same time, the organization of the *koinon* of the Boeotians was formed.

31 Thuc. V, 18, 7.

32 Thuc. V, 39, 2-3.

33 Thuc. V, 39, 3; 40; 42, 1-2; On the reasons behind the Boeotians' actions, Kelly 1972; Seager 1976, pp. 257-260; Rood 1998, pp. 100-102; Hornblower 2008, pp. 92-95, pp. 98-99.

34 Moscati Castelnuovo 2017, pp. 109-110.

35 Thuc. IV, 90-101, 1.

36 According to Moscati Castelnuovo the *tripodephoria* of the Boeotians at Dodona is charged with an additional meaning, connected to the well-known fertility of the Boeotian land and the importance of agriculture for the Boeotian economy (Moscati Castelnuovo 2017, pp. 121-123).

The process by which the military and religious league of the Boeotians turned into a confederation of *poleis* under the leadership of Thebes was neither rapid nor easy[37]. The Boeotian *koinon* was mostly the result of the Theban oligarchs' intense political activity, starting from the 6th century BC. Once the confederation was created[38], it was difficult to maintain the balance among the internal political forces competing for the leadership[39]. In the course of the 420s, more precisely in 427 BC, Thebes assumed a dominant position within the *koinon*, which had shaped itself politically and institutionally after 446 BC. Theban leadership was incisive, not to say aggressive[40]. As Moscati Castelnuovo rightly points out, it was important, in this new phase, to have the favour of a pan-Hellenic shrine, and particularly in the name of the entirety of Boeotia unified under the headship of Thebes[41].

The *tripodephoria* was thus a ritual for the whole of Boeotia. The reiteration of rites in larger social constructs, such as towns, villages or modern nations, helps consolidate society itself, its cohesion and its system of customs, habits, roles and rules. In Bell's words, «ritualization is first and foremost a strategy for the construction of certain types of power relationships effective within particular social organizations»[42]. In particular, rites are the instruments through which the social group reaffirms itself, remembers the past and makes it present, so to speak, by means of what may be, and in this case is, a truly dramatic and spectacular performance. All the more so as, in Moscati Castelnuovo's words, «grazie ad un rituale di risonanza

[37] On the difficult relationships between Plataeans and Thebans: Hdt. VI, 108, 1-2; Thuc. III, 55, 1.

[38] The date is controversial: *Inventory*, pp. 431-432.

[39] Salmon 1976, pp. 109-128; van Effenterre 1989; Buck 1994; Mafodda 2000, pp. 23-24, pp. 29-33.

[40] Mackil 2014, pp. 51-54.

[41] Moscati Castelnuovo 2017, p. 121. Although Ephorus and Proclus, as already pointed out, differ in identifying the inquirers of the oracle of Dodona during the war against the Pelasgians/Athenians, pinpointing respectively the Boeotians and the Thebans, they agree in saying that the *tripodephoria* at Dodona was a Boeotian rite. Its role was to legitimate their *koinon* through the endorsement of the most ancient oracle of the Greek world.

[42] Bell 1992, p. 197.

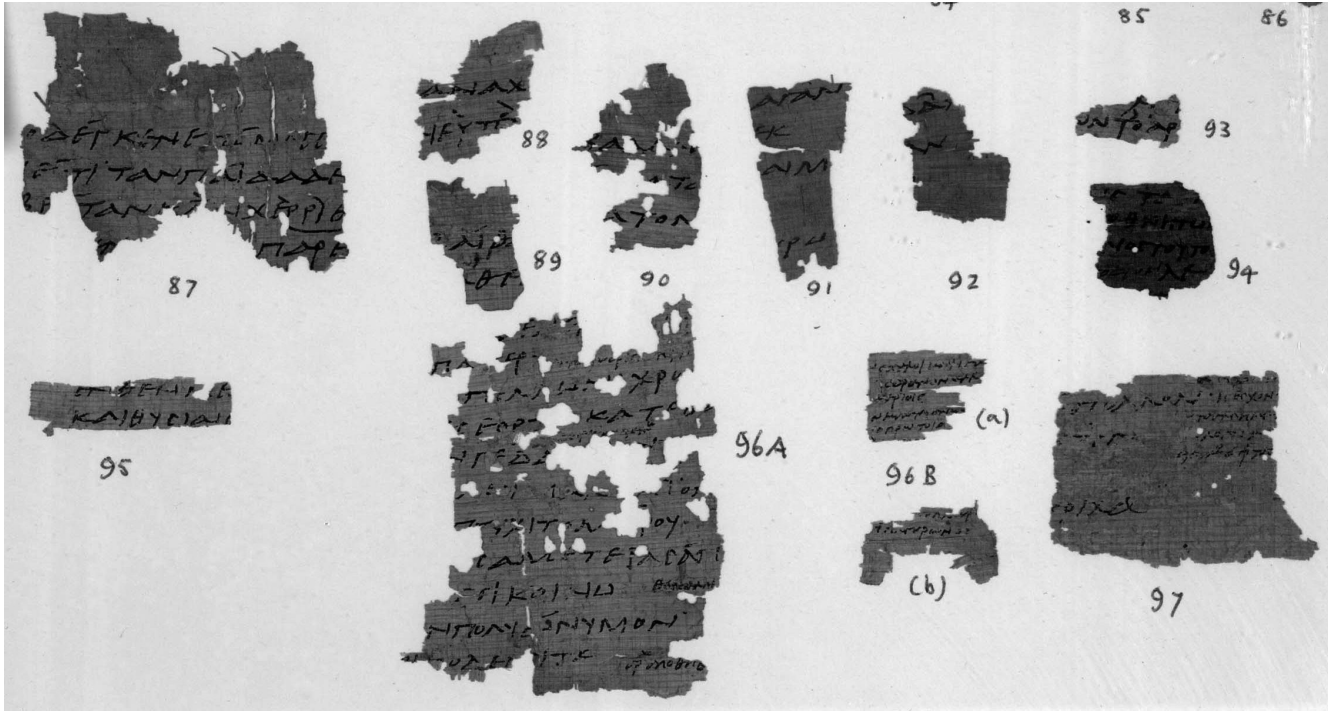

Fig. 4. *P.Oxy.* 2442 fragments (courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society and Imaging papyri Project, Oxford)

internazionale reiterato annualmente, compiuto dai Beoti anche se voluto e diretto dai Tebani, l'identità beotica, e il *koinon* che su di essa si fondava, ricevevano la sanzione sacrale che ne suggellavano e legittimavano l'esistenza»[43].

The annual performance, i.e. the procession from Boeotia to Dodona might, therefore, have worked as a rite on several different levels: between Boeotia and Dodona, between Thebans and the other Boeotians, and finally for the Boeotians as an ethnic group.

Pindar, Dodona and Thessaly

In a recent book, Barbara Kowalzig associated a Pindaric fragment[44] with the *tripodephoria* of the Boeotians at Dodona and the mythical wandering of the Boeotians and Thessalians sixty years after the Trojan war[45]. The fragment, preserved in an Oxyrincus papyrus, is composed of few small extracts (fig. 4): fr. 96A is the largest piece and contains the bulk of the text with some interlinear *scholia*; fr. 41A reports two words, tentatively framed by Lobel in ll. 6-7; fr. 95 has a few letters, possibly the beginning of ll. 10-11[46]:

~ 14]..εν̣..[~ 4] . .[
~ 11]πάτερ·[47]

[43] Moscati Castelnuovo 2017, p. 121.

[44] Pind., fr. 59. The fragment has been variously interpreted: Snell, Maehler 1984 classify it as belonging to a paean and Filoni 2007 agrees. Schachter 1994, p. 154 n. 3 advanced the hypothesis that the poems were two, a song for Zeus Dodonaeus, to which fr. 58 should belong, and a tripodephoric poem for the Thebans at Dodona (fr. 59); D'Alessio 1997, pp. 45-46 thinks of it came from a paean in which the Theban *tripodephoria* to Dodona was mentioned; according to Rutherford 2001, pp. 351-355, pp. 427-429, there are no formal properties suggesting that fragment 59 is from a paean. The first line bears a resemblance to the opening lines of a hymn to Zeus, if fr. 59 (= schol. Soph., *Trach*. 172) is linked to fr. 57* – Δωδωναῖε μεγασθενές / ἀριστότεχνα πάτερ – «Dodona father of great strength, excellent in respect of art» (transl. I. Rutherford), but Rutherford claims that it remains a tentative hypothesis; Hornblower 2004, pp. 175-176 talks generically about a poem, from which «perhaps all these fragments (57, 59, 60) come».

[45] Cf. Thuc. VII, 57, 5. Thuc. I, 12, 3; Paus. X, 8, 4.

[46] *P. Oxy*. 2442, Lobel 1961, pp. 69-71.

[47] Filoni 2007 claims that fragment 57 (Snell, Maehler) – Δωδωναῖε μεγασθενές /

[ ]θι τόπου ὁριστ[ικ(όν) ἰν[α
ι(τ)ό]θι ~?].π' Ἑλλῶν.χρο[(3)
~ 11]ες ἑορτ[ά .] κατεβα[
δ..ρ.....ετε[κ]
~ 11]ν γεδα[..].(.)ν· [
ἀψευδὲ[ς| ~ 4].ε̣υ μαν̣[τ]ήϊον[(6)
ἐφέπετ̣[αι| ~ 3]πτυχὶ Τομά̣ρου[
~ 12]ς ἀμετέρας ἄπ[ο
Θεσσαλοι̣[
~ 6 φόρμι]γγι κοινω- (9)
σ ~ 9]ν πολυώνυμον·
ἔνθεν μὲν̣[|τ]ρι̣π̣όδεσ̣σ̣ί τε
αρ[χ]αποθηβ[
καὶ θυσίαις [| ~ 8]

«father…of Elloi…festival…come down… oracle without deceit… follows…the fold of Tomarus…from our (country? voice?)…share with the lyre…with many names…whence the tripods and sacrifices…» (transl. I. Rutherford).

Kowalzig is right in claiming that there is no doubt about Dodona as "the setting" of the poem[48]: the mention of the Helloi[49] in l. 3, i.e. the priests of Zeus Dodonaeus, of the Tomaroi, the mountains near the shrine in l. 7, and of an oracle μαν̣[τ]ήϊον in l. 6, make the reference to the sanctuary of Zeus Dodonaeus unequivocal. Difficulties arise, however, when the scholar interprets, perhaps too enthusiastically, the fragment as part of the *tripodephorikon melos*, accompanying the procession of the tripod from Boeotia to Dodona, as mentioned by Proclus-Photius.

Her hypothesis is based on a few words of the fragment and on the interlinear *scholia* commenting on the verses. In particular, Kowalzig thinks that «what has made this fragment tripodophoric can be found in the two lines which are commonly added as verses 11-12 to fr. 59 – ἔνθεν μὲν̣[|τ]ρι̣π̣όδεσ̣σ̣ί τε καὶ θυσίαισ̣[|]. These lines appear on the papyrus separately from

ἀριστότεχνα πάτερ – belongs to the first two lines of the poem, as matching with the letters and the gaps reported in fr. 59 (Snell, Maehler).

48 Kowalzig 2007, pp. 331-336.

49 From Hom., *Il.* XVI, 233-236 onwards the priests at Dodona were usually called Selloi.

the bulk of the text, but stand near to 9-10»[50]. Kowalzig took them all together, saying that «here some ritual activity is mentioned, involving combined θυσίαι ("sacrifices") and, in an inescapable supplement, τ]ῥιπόδεσσί ("with tripods")» as well as some "singing" accompanied by instruments –]γγι – (l. 9). She goes on to assume that «if these lines belong to the song, it is highly probable that the preceding text told of events or people connected with the mythical past of the sanctuary». The adverb, introducing them, – ἔνθεν – in l. 11, meaning «from there/then onwards», implies that the song recalls, or even just mentions, an *aition* of a rite or something else performed at Dodona. She concludes that this has «something to do with the Θεσσαλοί», whose presence in the interlinear *scholion* is obscure only at first glance, but in truth «provides a key to the mystery of the rite»[51]. Another key element, according to Kowalzig, is the last interlinear *scholion*, αρχ( ) ἀπὸ Θηβ[ῶν «starting[52] from Thebes», likely indicating the point of departure of the singing and the tripods (l. 11).

These data, according to Kowalzig, should be read within the context of the complicated set of traditions, myths of migration and peoples' wandering in north-central Greece[53], emphasizing people's arrival in a given area – in this case the Boeotians in Boeotia from Thessaly. The *tripodephoria* and the *tripodephoricon melos*, according to her interpretation, continuously re-enacted a myth in a ritual, "staging" again and again their arrival. In other words, according to Kowalzig, the combination of the fragments with the mythological traditions of the wandering of the Boeotians from Thessaly to Boeotia makes it very likely that these fragments of Pindar belong to the *tripodephoricon melos*, thus attesting to the existence of the

[50] It should be noted how Lobel, the first editor of the papyrus, was cautious in placing fr. 95 in the text: Lobel 1961, p. 69, fr. 95: «I am not sure that it may not contain the beginning of fr. 96A 11 seq.».

[51] Kowalzig 2007, p. 332.

[52] Filoni 2007, pp. 61-62 read αρχ– as the abbreviation of the Ἀρίσταρχος, in reason of the superscripted letters, but according to McNamee's abbreviation system or ἀρ^{χ}–, stands for «beginning» (McNamee 1981, p. 11), as accepted by Rutherford 2001, p. 429 and Kowalzig 2007, pp. 332-333.

[53] Thuc. I, 12, 3; Paus. X, 8, 4.

annual[54] *tripodephoria* of the Boeotians to Dodona in the early 5th century[55].

Yet, Pindar cannot be the poet of the *tripodephorikon melos* because of a problem of chronology: if, as it seems, the rite of the *tripodephoria* at Dodona is not earlier than the last quarter of the 5th century BC, Pindar, who died in 438 BC[56], cannot be the author of any poem accompanying the ritual procession of the Boeotians[57].

A close reading of these Pindaric fragment(s) and *scholia* may in fact reveal a different net of relationships, in which Boeotians and Thebes in Boeotia never appear.

Words like κατεβα[... «come down» in l. 4, commented on by the interlinear *scholion* in l. 5 ἔτεκ(εν) «gave birth», the interlinear ἀρχ( ) ἀπὸ Θηβ[ῶν «starting from Thebes», which may refer to Thebes in Egypt from where a dove left to reach Dodona[58], not to mention the adverb ἔνθεν «from there, then onwards» in fr. 95 of dubious location in the text[59], point to reading this fragment as a reference to the origin of the oracular shrine of Dodona and its priests rather than to a rite associated with it.

A key element to consider is ἀμετέρας ἄπ[ο... in l. 8 «from our country? voice?», which Rutherford rightly assigns to the place or to the voice of the poet[60]. In both cases Pindar himself is speaking, and with the use of the plural possessive adjective ἀμετέρας the poet tied himself and, at least, part of the audience to a common voice/song or country. The interlinear *scholion* Θεσσαλοί, commenting on the verse in l. 8, suggests that Pindar was sharing something, i.e. voice, song or country, with

54 Ephorus *FGrHist* 70 F 119 (= Strabo IX, 2, 4, C 402) writes that it was «annual» – κατ' ἔτος.

55 Kowalzig 2007, pp. 328-391.

56 Gentili 2013, p. XVIII.

57 Moscati Castelnuovo 2017, p. 120.

58 Schol. Soph. *Trach*. 172; Hdt. II, 52-55. According to Maehler 2001, p. 71, schol. «ἀρχ( ) ἀπὸ Θηβ[ῶν *ad* ἔνθεν *referri potest*».

59 *Supra*.

60 Rutherford 2001, p. 429.

the Thessalians. The verse was probably referring to something shared with Thessaly, not Boeotia.

The Boeotian Pindar was likely a *proxenos* of the Thessalians at the very beginning of the 5th century BC, when he was patronized by the Aleuadae[61]. *Communis opinio* is that Pindar was a *proxenos* of the Molossians. This (incorrect) assumption derives from the numerous references to Neoptolemus and his realm in Thesprotia in *Pythian* X and *Nemean* VII[62]. Yet the *saga* of Neoptolemus and the Aeacidae was not an exclusive feature of the cultural heritage of the Molossian royal house[63]. The son of Achilles and his *nostos* was a legend exploited by the Aleuadae, the Thessalian *tagai*, too.

The Aleuadae, in the person of Thorax, the son of Aleuas, were the first to commission a poem from Pindar in 498 BC[64]. The poet owed them his debut. A sense of gratitude pervades all Pindaric production, in subtle references to the ancient progenitors, i.e. the Aeacidae and the Heracleidae, of his first patrons, the Aleuadae. Whenever there was an occasion, as in the Aeginetan lyrics, in which the ancient ties between the island and Thessaly are also exploited[65], Pindar refers to Neoptolemus, his realm and *nostos*, thus celebrating indirectly the Aleuadae. The

[61] An examination of the literary sources reveals that the reference to the relationship of *xenia/proxenia* of Pindar indeed concerns the Aleuadae. Pind., *Pyth*. X, 63-66: πέποιθα ξενίᾳ προσανέϊ Θώρα- / κος, ὅσπερ ἐμὰν ποιπνύων χάριν / τόδ' ἔζευξεν ἅρμα Πιερίδων τετράορον, /__φιλέων φιλέοντ', ἄγων ἄγοντα – «I trust in the gentle friendship of Thorax; he made busy efforts for my sake, and yoked this four-horse chariot of the Pierian Muses, a friend for a friend, going gladly arm in arm» (transl. D. Arnson Svarlien).

[62] von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1908, pp. 328-335; von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1922, p. 167; Most 1985, pp. 323-323 and n. 31-32; Parke 1967, p. 144; Pippin Burnett 2005, pp. 195-199; Hornblower 2004, p. 177; Currie 2005, pp. 340-343. Carey 1981, pp. 163 thinks that the Achaean man in the *Nemean VII* was a certain Thearion, a *proxenos* of the Molossians in Aegina.

[63] After the Persian Wars the saga of the Aeacidae was exploited by the tyrants of Cyprus, the Teucrides (Isocr., *Evag*. 13-19), by the Molossians and Alexander the Great and by the Thessalians (Sordi 1979, pp. 162-163).

[64] Pind., *Pyth*. X, 5-8. Sordi 1958, p. 64; Gentili 1995, pp. XXVIII-XXXI; Hornblower 2004, pp. 172-173.

[65] As for the association between the Myrmidons of Thessalian legend and the ant-men of Aegina underlying the identification of the island's founder, i.e. the father of Homer's Peleus, already in the 7th century BC, West 1985 pp. 163-165; Sordi 1979, p. 162; Pippin Burnett 2005, pp. 17-21.

reference to the «Achaean man» in *Nemean* VII, for instance, should be read – and makes sense – as a reference to the progenitors of the Thessalians and not to the Molossians. The reference is not to an unknown tie between Aeginetans and Molossians via Neoptolemus, rather it is yet another opportunity to praise the Thessalian royal house, tied both with the Aeginetans and the Molossians.

To come back to Pindar's fragment, a further element in support of this Thessalian flavour of the text is the use in l. 3 of the form "Helloi", previously unknown, to indicate the sacred officials at Dodona. In Homer the priests of Zeus at Dodona are called "Selloi", Pindar opts for "Helloi"[66], which creates a link between Dodona and Thessaly: Hellos the woodcutter, the ancestor of the Helloi, «to whom they say the pigeon showed the oracle»[67] at Dodona, was the "son of Thessalos", the eponym of the Thessalians. The *scholia D in Iliadem* commenting on the word Selloi, moreover, say precisely that Hellos was, according to Pindar, the woodcutter of Dodona[68].

Thus ll. 3-8, mentioning the Helloi, the Tmaroi montains, the oracle and something in common with the Thessalians in the main fragment, might refer specifically to the origin of the sacred officials of the sanctuary, the Selloi, here called by Pindar Helloi, within a poem alluding to the Egyptian origin of the oracle and perhaps also to the other priestesses if, as it seems, the reference in the interlinear *scholion* l. 11 is to Thebes in Egypt.

Finally, another small piece of the papyrus, i.e. fr. 96B, transmits worn *scholia* commenting on words of the main text and

66 Schironi 2004, pp. 376-377.

67 Schol. D Hom. *Il*. XVI, 234: Σελλοί: Πίνδαρος Ἕλλοί χωρὶς τοῦ ς, ἀπὸ Ἕλλοῦ τοῦ δρυτόμου, ᾧ φασι τὴν περιστερὰν πρώτην καταδεῖξαι τὸ μαντεῖον; Proxenus *FGrHist* 703 F 7 (= Eust., *Od*. XIV, 327).

68 Schol. D Hom. *Il*. XVI, 234 (Van Thiel 2014, p. 485): Σελλοί: „Ἑλλοί", ἀπὸ Ἕλλοῦ τοῦ Θεσσαλοῦ. οὕτω δὲ ὁ ποιητὴς καὶ οἱ παλαιοί. τινὲς δὲ Σελλοί, ἀπὸ Σελλήεντος τοῦ ποταμοῦ, ὃς νῦν †ὡς καλῶς† καλεῖται. ἐὰν δὲ εἴπωμεν Σελλοί, ἔσονται περὶ πᾶσαν τὴν Δωδώνην οἰκοῦντες, οὐ περὶ τὸ τέμενος τοῦ θεοῦ· καὶ βέλτιον· ἐν Δωδώνῃ γὰρ τὸ γένος ἐστὶ τῶν ἱερέων τοῦ Διὸς κατὰ διαδοχήν. κοινὸν δὲ τοῖς πᾶσι Ἕλλησι τὸ ἐνταῦθα ἱερόν. σημειωτέον ὅτι ἄνδρας φησὶν αὐτόθι προφητεύειν; ἀπὸ †σελλοῦ† τοῦ Θετταλοῦ τοῦτο τὸ γένος· ὅθεν κατὰ διαδοχὴν οἱ τοῦ Διὸς ἱερεῖς ἐγίνοντο; Hellos the son of Thessalos or Hellos the Thessalian: the *scholion* is not clear.

is fundamental in interpreting the fragment. Fr. 96B(a) and (b) note – judging from their contents – the two previously unknown variations Ἔλλοι and Δωδών. Fr. 96B(a) is more complete, but the last two lines can be integrated as follows:

[Ὅμηρ]ος Σελλοὶ Καλλίμα[χος]
ἀμφότερα ἕδρανον Ἕλλῳ[ν καὶ
Σελλὸς ἐνὶ T]μαρίοις [
τὴ]ν μάντειαν Ἠπ[είρου (?)
Θ]εσπρωτοὶ δι̣[
]…[ ]…[

«[Homer] Selloi, Callima[chus] both seat of the Helloi [and Sellos among the T]marioi [… the] prophetic power of Ep[irus (?) ….Th]esprotians […]».

Fr. 96B(b), as rightly suggested by Rutherford, recalls the *scholion* of Sophocles' *Trachianiae*, «where a third-declension version of the name Δωδών is compared with the place-name Πλευρών, Πλευρῶνος»[69], and as in Stephanus of Byzantium's Δωδώνη[70]:

[…] Πλευρ[ών
(?) γενικ]ὴ Πλευρῶνος […]

«[…] Pleur[on genitive (?)] Pleuronos […]».

Δωδών was indeed one of the names of Dodona, along with Δωδώνη and Δωδώ, and perhaps not by chance in l. 10 in the main fragment the adjective πολυώνυμον «with many names» connected to a missing masculine/neuter word, might also refer to it (τὸ μαντεῖον/μαντήϊον ?).

Thus considering:

a. The contents of the two *lemmata* in fr. 96B and interlinear *scholia* in fr. 96A, which point towards a verse on the origin of the priests known as Helloi (and of the oracle of Dodona);
b. The Homeric *scholia* mentioning Pindar as the source of the legend according to which Hellos the woodcutter was the eponymous ancestor of the Helloi;

[69] Rutherford 2001, p. 429 n. 5.
[70] Steph. Byz. s.v. Δωδώνη.

c. The metrical analysis by Filoni[71], who, as Maehler[72], interprets the poem as a paean;
d. The link between all these elements and the *scholion* to Sophocles' *Trachiniae*[73], which mentions a tradition about the origins of the oracle of Δωδών, founded by two doves ἐκ Θηβῶν Αἰγυπτίων, as Herodotus says and ὡς καὶ Πίνδαρος Παιᾶσιν[74];

It can be deduced that the fragment from the papyrus belongs to this Pindaric *Paean*[75]. More specifically the fragment must have contained hints as to the origin of the male and female priesthood at Dodona.

71 Filoni 2007, part. p. 37, p. 58, pp. 65-66 – he believes, then, that fr. 57 and 58 are the *incipit* of the poem.

72 Maehler 1989, pp. 69-71.

73 Schol. Soph., *Trach*. 172: (Δωδῶνι δισσῶν ἐκ πελειάδων): τὴν ἐν Δωδώνῃ τῆς Θεσπρωτίας φηγὸν ἐφ' ᾗ δύο περιστεραὶ καθήμεναι ἐμαντεύοντο. ὡς ἀπ' εὐθείας δὲ τῆς ἡ Δωδὼν ὡς Πλευρών· Ὅμηρος δὲ Δωδώνην εἶπεν. ὑπεράνω τοῦ ἐν Δωδώνῃ μαντείου δύο ἦσαν πέλειαι δι' ὧν ἐμαντεύετο ὁ Ζεύς, ὡς Ἀπόλλων ἀπὸ τρίποδος. οἱ μὲν οὕτω λέγουσι θεσπίζειν, οἱ δὲ οὕτω τὰς ἱερείας γραίας οὔσας· καὶ γὰρ τοὺς γέροντας οἱ Μολοσσοὶ πελιοὺς ὀνομάζουσιν. Ἡρόδοτος δὲ ἐν β΄ φησί· «Πελειάδες δέ μοι δοκέουσι κεκλῆσθαι πρὸς Δωδωναίων αἱ γυναῖκες, διότι βάρβαροι οὖσαι ἐδόκουν ὁμοίως ὄρνισι φθέγγεσθαι, μετὰ δὲ χρόνον δοκοῦσιν ἀνθρωπίνῃ φωνῇ φθέγξασθαι» [ἐπείπερ ἐκ Θηβῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἦσαν]. Εὐριπίδης τρεῖς γεγονέναι φησὶν αὐτάς, οἱ δὲ δύο, καὶ τὴν μὲν εἰς Λιβύην ἀφικέσθαι Θήβηθεν, εἰς τὸ τοῦ Ἄμμωνος χρηστήριον, τὴν δὲ <εἰς τὸ> περὶ τὴν Δωδώνην, ὡς καὶ Πίνδαρος Παιᾶσιν. – «From the two doves at Dodona. The oak at Dodona in Thesprotia, on which two doves sat and prophesied. It is formed as if from a nominative Δωδών, like Πλευρών; Homer uses Δωδώνη. On the same line: above the oracle in Dodona there were two doves, which Zeus used to prophesy, as Apollo prophesied from the tripod. Some say that he prophesied in this way, others that the priestesses were old women, since the Molossians call old people πέλειοι. Herodotus says in his second book: "I believe that the women were called doves by the inhabitants of Dodona because they were barbarians and their voices sounded like birds; after a time they seemed to speak with human voice… since they were from Thebes in Egypt". Euripides says that there were three of them, others say that there were two, and that one came from Thebes to the oracle of Ammon in Libya, while the other went to the area of Dodona. Pindar also gave this version in his *Paianes*» (transl. I. Rutherford).

74 On the similarities between the version of Herodotus and Pindar, schol. Soph., *Trach*. 172; Nesselrath 1999; Rutherford 2001, pp. 352-353.

75 In support of the interpretation of the poem as a Paean comes the metric analysis of Filoni (2007, part. pp. 65-66).

The Aleuadae and Dodona

Pindar's *Paean* strongly tied Thessaly to the oracle of Dodona, by making its priests Helloi and their eponymous ancestor Hellos from Thessaly. Such forceful testimony is unlikely to have been mere poetic contrivance and embellishment, but is rather a response to a wider strategy promoted by Pindar's patrons, the Aleuadae. It might not be unreasonable, then, to advance the hypothesis that the Aleuadae wished to link themselves to Dodona and, therefore, commissioned the *Paean*.

According to a program inspired by Aleuas[76], and continued by his successors, especially by his son Thorax, the Thessalian *tagai* from the end of the 6th century BC onwards reinforced their power at an international and regional level by building up an intricate net of mythical and diplomatic ties with other leading powers[77]. Apart from the celebrated alliance with Sparta, echoed in the opening of Pindar's *Pythian* X[78], and the Aleuadae's support of the Peisistratidae, especially in the events of 511/0 BC[79], the Thessalian *tagai* were particularly interested in playing a prominent role in Delphi[80] and, as literary evidence suggests, in Dodona.

Between the end of the 6th and the beginning of the 5th centuries BC, after a difficult period for the Thessalians at Delphi,

[76] For the identification of Aleuas the Red, with Aleuas son of Simas, Sordi 1958, pp. 64-84; Helly 1995, pp. 116-124.

[77] Sordi 1958, pp. 65-96. For the Thessalian aristocracy's endeavour of emerging internationally in the 6th and 5th century, Stamatopoulou 2007. Mili 2015, pp. 242-243 dates the strong connection between Delphi and Thessaly in 5th century BC.

[78] Pind., *Pyth.* X, 1-2. Also Sordi 1958, pp. 80-82.

[79] Hdt. V, 63, 3; V, 64, 2; Sordi 1958, pp. 55-58, p. 82; Larsen 1968, p. 18; Giuliani 2001, pp. 47-48. A further element demonstrating the strong ties between the Peisistratidae and Thessaly is the name of one of Peisistratus' sons, Thessalos (Thuc. VI, 55, 1). Whether Thessalos was a byname for Hegesistratus, an illegitimate son of Peisistratus by an Argive woman (Hdt. V, 94, 1; Ps.-Arist., *Athen. Pol.* XVII, 3) is controversial, Davies 1971, pp. 448-449. After 511/0 BC when Hippias was pulled out from Athens by the Spartans, he went to Sigeon, rejecting the offers of the Macedonian king Amyntas and the Thessalians (Hdt. V, 94-95). The daughter of Hippias was named Archedice (Thuc. VI, 59, 3), as the mother of Aleuas (Plut., *De fraterno amore* XXI = *Mor.* 492B).

[80] Sordi 1958, pp. 51-61, p. 75, pp. 79-84; Hall 2002, p. 169; Mili 2015, pp. 241-247. On the role of Thessaly at Delphi before, during and after the First Sacred War, Sordi 1953, part. pp. 343-349 is still fundamental.

Aleuas managed to gain the support of the shrine[81]. To shore up the position acquired by his *koinon* in retaining the presidency of the Delphic Amphyctiony and the *prostatia* of the Pythic Games, Aleuas built up a mythic-historical justification for the Thessalian leadership[82], through the introduction of the cult of Neoptolemus in Delphi[83]. After 506 BC Delphi became the major promoter of the cult of the Aeacidae and of the imperialistic policy of Aleuas. Moreover, the myth of Neoptolemus also worked to construct a cohesive ethnic identity within the Thessalian *koinon*[84]. To this end Aleuas exploited the tradition according to which Neoptolemus reached Thesprotia and Dodona, as well as the connection between Achilles, the hero of Phthtia in ancient Thessaly, and Zeus Dodonaeus[85].

In the *Iliad*[86], Neoptolemus was not a Thessalian hero, but like Achilles, he was an Achaean, who had inhabited Thessaly before the Thessalians moved in, and abandoned it after the Trojan war to go on to Epirus (and Dodona). Thus only the inhabitants of Achaea Phthiotis could vaunt their Aeacidaean roots. Yet at the end of the 6th century BC Neoptolemus was celebrated as a "regional" hero in Thessaly and in the 5th century BC as a fully Thessalian hero in Delphi[87]. Through this myth, Aleuas blended the Heracleidae's promotion of the Thessalian aristocracy with the Achaean origins of the ancient inhabitants of Thessaly before the Doric invasion[88]. In the program

81 Sordi 1958, pp. 51-61, p. 75, pp. 79-84; Sordi 1979. According to tradition, king Aleuas was designated by the Pythia (Plut., *De fraterno amore* XXI = *Mor.* 492B).

82 Sordi 1958, pp. 79-84. For the association of Neoptolemus with the Delphic *Theoxenia*, Defradas 1954, p. 149, pp. 154-156; Fontenrose 1960, p. 207; Currie 2005, pp. 301-302; Kowalzig 2007, pp. 192-195; Mili 2015, pp. 241-247.

83 Pind., *Nem.* VII, 45-47; Sordi 1958, pp. 79-80; Lepore 1962, pp. 44-52; Suàrez de la Torre 1997; Currie 2005, pp. 296-301.

84 The cult of the Aeacidae and Heracleidae also played a role in the internal policy of Aleuas (Sordi 1958, pp. 67-71 and pp. 76-78).

85 Hom., *Il.* XVI, 233-236; Janko 1992, pp. 348-350.

86 Hom., *Il.* XIX, 326-334.

87 Pind., *Nem.* VII, 33-36 (Neoptolemus buried in Delphi); Sordi 1958, pp. 70-71 *contra* Mili 2015, pp. 242-243. In Pindar's *Paean VI* (490 BC), which dates before *Nemean VII* (467 BC), Neoptolemus died in the Omphalos at the hands of Apollo because of the double sacrilege he committed towards Priam and the shrine of Delphi.

88 Thuc. I, 12, 3; VII, 57, 5; Paus. X, 8, 4.

of Aleuas, the Heracleidaean origin of the Thessalians, descendants of Antiphon and Phidippos, lords of Cos and sons of Thessalos[89], thus nephews of Heracles[90], was associated with the progeny of the Aeacidae, Neoptolemus Pyrrhus, son of Achilles, who according to the *nostoi* had not returned to his home town in Thessaly, but came instead to Dodona, where he founded the Molossian kingdom. In the variant introduced by Aleuas in the last decade of the 6th century BC, Phidippos and Antiphon from Cos landed in Thesprotia, before arriving in Thessaly. In Thesprotia, precisely at Dodona[91], they met the descendants of Neoptolemus-Pyrrhus, blending two blood-lines[92]. This new lineage, which merged the Heracleidae and Aeacidae pedigrees, crossed the Pindos chain sixty years after the Troy war[93]. In this way the invasion of the Thessalians assumed the semblance of a return and healed the breach between the descendants of the ancient inhabitants of the region, reduced to *penestai*, and the Heracleidaean aristocracy.

In this sense the assumption of the epithet Pyrrhus by Aleuas the Red, the same as that of Neoptolemus, as well as the division of Thessaly into four tetrads, three of which recall the names of the ancient sub-region, Phthiotis, Pelasgiotis, and Hestiaiotis[94], completes the picture.

89 Hom., *Il*. II, 676-679.

90 The Thessalians were from Cos in the *Nostoi*, dating at least to the mid-7th century BC, and in the *Catalogue of Ships*, from the end of the 7th century BC, but containing more ancient elements (Sordi 1958, p. 3).

91 Dodona in Thesprotia: Hom., *Od*. XIX, 291-299; Hdt. II, 56, 1; Aesch., *Prom*. 830-831; Eurip., *Phoen*. 982; the Thessalians are said to be from Thesprotia too (Hdt. VII, 176). According to Strabo VII, 7, 11, C 328, καὶ οἱ τραγικοὶ δὲ καὶ Πίνδαρος Θεσπρωτίδα εἰρήκασι τὴν Δωδώνην «both the tragic poets and Pindar have called Dodona *Thesprotian Dodona*».

92 Such a strategic *syngheneia* was exploited later by Alexander the Great to consolidate the ties between Molossia and Thessaly (Diod. XVII, 4, 1; Iust. XI, 3, 1; Sordi 1956).

93 Thuc. I, 12, 3; Paus. X, 8, 4.

94 Arist. fr. 497 (Rose) = Harpocr. s.v. τετραρχία: τεττάρων μερῶν ὄντων τῆς Θετταλίας ἕκαστον μέρος τετρὰς ἐκαλεῖτο, καθά φησιν Ἑλλάνικος ἐν τοῖς Θετταλικοῖς. ὄνομα δέ φησιν εἶναι ταῖς τετράσι. Θετταλιῶτιν Φθιῶτιν Πελασγιῶτιν Ἑστιαιῶτιν. καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης δὲ ἐν τῇ κοινῇ Θετταλῶν πολιτείᾳ ἐπὶ Ἀλεύα τοῦ πυρροῦ διῃρῆσθαί φησιν εἰς δ μοίρας τὴν Θετταλίαν. «Tetrarchy: …Each of the four parts of Thessaly was called a tetras (i.e. "fourth"), as Hellanicus says in his *On Thessaly*. He says that the names of the tetrades were Thettaliotis, Phthiotis,

The support of two major sanctuaries, Delphi and Dodona, strongly tied with the genealogy and history of Thessaly, would have thus also guaranteed Aleuas, the maker and consolidator of the *koinon* of Thessaly, a solid international prestige. As for Dodona, a double bond linked Thessaly and the shrine: besides making the most of the myth of the Aeacidae via Pindar, Aleuas also exploited the Thessalian origin of the officials of the sanctuary by making them the descendants of Thessalos, the Heraclidaean eponym of his *ethnos*[95].

Pelasgiotis, and Hestiaiotis. Aristotle, in his *Constitutons of the Thessalians* says that Thessaly was divided into four parts at the time of Aleuas the Red»; Sordi 1958, pp. 73-74, pp. 313-343; Helly 1995, pp. 150-167.

[95] According to Philostratus the oracle of Dodona also tied the Thessalian *theoria* to the *Achilleion* in Troad, in the Hellenistic period (Philostr., *Heroic*. LIII, 8-16; Bradshaw Aitken 2001; Rutherford 2009; Graninger 2011, p. 149; Rutherford 2013, pp. 346-349; Mili 2015, p. 175).

Appendix – The Foundation Legends

The foundation legends of the Dodonaean oracle are numerous and spread over a long span of time, from ca. the end of the 6th century BC, if not earlier, up to the 3rd century AD. Their nature, sources and purposes are different, but two main strands, one merging the Egyptian derivation of the oracle with the Thessalian connection and another claiming a wholly Thessalian origin, can be ascertained.

Pindar's paean, according to the *scholion* to Sophocles' *Trachiniae* and to inferences from the interlinear *scholia* to Pindar's fr. 59[96], should have touched upon the foundation of the oracles by two doves from Thebes in Egypt, which founded respectively the oracular shrines of Zeus Ammon in Siwah and of Dodona in Epirus[97]. The male officials of the sanctuary, named Selloi by Homer and Helloi by Pindar, were, according to the latter, of Thessalian origin, named after Hellos son of Thessalos[98].

Pindar's main purpose, as already pointed out, was to tie the sanctuary with Thessaly: he did so through the Helloi, but at the same time he made room for the story of the two doves which at his time was probably already well established.

The longest and most famous account concerning the establishment of the sanctuary of Dodona is in Herodotus' book 2, in which the origin of the oracle is linked with that of Zeus Ammon's shrine at Siwah[99]. Like Pindar, Herodotus reports the story of the two doves from Thebes in Egypt founding the two oracular sanctuaries of Zeus, one in Libya and one in Hellas.

In the course of the comparative analysis between Egyptian and Greek religions, the historian provides a long *excursus*, containing the legend(s) of the foundation of the oracles as heard from his sources, i.e. the priests in Egypt and the priestesses and the Dodonaeans[100] in Dodona, and his critical interpretation.

96 Schol. Soph., *Trach*. 172 and Pind. fr. 59 (pp. 102-118).

97 Parke 1967, pp. 57-58; Nesselrath 1999.

98 Pp. 114-118.

99 Hdt. II, 52-57.

100 To be read both as the priests and those living around the sanctuary (Hdt. II, 55, 3; 57, 1; *Inventory*, pp. 343-344).

The first account is that told by Zeus Ammon's priests at Thebes in Egypt[101], who supplied a story of the foundation of two oracles, one in Hellas and another in Libya – Χρηστηρίων δὲ πέρι τοῦ τε ἐν Ἕλλησι καὶ τοῦ ἐν Λιβύῃ τόνδε Αἰγύπτιοι λόγον λέγουσι: two women, consecrated to Zeus Ammon, were kidnapped by the Phoenicians; despite careful searching, the priests in Thebes had never been be able to find them, but learnt that one was sold in Libya and the other in Hellas. In both places they had been the first to establish oracles (of Zeus)[102].

In Dodona Herodotus heard a different story: two black doves flew from Thebes in Egypt, one reached Libya and the other Dodona, where it alighted on an oak tree and proclaimed with a human voice the sacredness of the place. The priestesses at Dodona[103] said that the dove that reached Libya also told the Libyans to make an oracle of Zeus Ammon.

After having reported both accounts, Herodotus expresses his own opinion – Ἐγὼ δ' ἔχω περὶ αὐτῶν γνώμην τήνδε –, trying to harmonise and rationalise the tales, highlighting the common elements and smoothing out the differences[104]. Herodotus thinks the story of the two priestesses kidnapped in Egypt plausible: if one was sold in Libya, the other, he thinks – δοκέει ἐμοὶ –, was sold to the Thesprotians «in what is now Hellas, but before, although it was the same, was called Pelasgia». The woman came to Epirus «as a slave» and «founded the sanctuary of Zeus under an oak tree, born spontaneously»[105]. Herodotus, then, says that later the woman learnt the Greek language, established an oracle and told her story and that of her sister sold in Libya by the Phoenicians. That the priestesses at Dodona were called doves, according to Herodotus – μοι δοκέουσι –, is a metaphor pointing to the fact that the first woman founding the oracle was barbarian and, at least at the beginning, could not speak Greek,

101 In few lines Herodotus indicates repeatedly his sources (Hdt. II, 54, 1).

102 Hdt. II, 54, 2.

103 Herodotus (II, 55, 3) very carefully reports the names of his sources: Promeneia, Timarete and Nicandra.

104 Parke 1967, pp. 54-55; Lloyd 2004, pp. XVII-XXI; Hawes 2016, pp. 329-331.

105 Hdt. II, 56, 2.

communicating in an incomprehensible language and emitting sounds like the cooing of the birds[106]. Herodotus adduces the black colour of the dove, a detail in the Dodonaean story, as further proof of the priestess' Egyptian origin as referring to the dark skin of the woman. He concludes his critical harmonization by stating that the mantic practice at Thebes in Egypt and at Dodona were like one another[107].

The first story, i.e. the one about two priestesses kidnapped by Phoenicians told by the priests in Egypt, had an external source: the historian asked his informants «how it was that they could speak with such certain knowledge» about the women founding oracles in Hellas and Libya, if they had never been able to find them. The Egyptian priests replied that they «had learned later the story», so implying that someone else from outside supplied them full information about the two women. On the contrary, according to Herodotus, the Dodonaean source was internal, namely the first priestess of the oracle, i.e. the black dove herself, who once she had learned the Greek language divulged her story to the locals.

It is likely that the account, involving three sanctuaries of Zeus, was first produced not at Thebes in Egypt, but either at Dodona or at Siwah, that is to say two sanctuaries which could have profited the most from the connection with the Egyptian shrine[108]. Most probably the Dodonaean priestesses were responsible for elaborating and circulating such a story[109]. When Dodona grew in importance and became the destination of international "pilgrimage", the need of an adequate and solid foundation myth, honouring its antiquity, became imperative[110].

106 Hdt. II, 57, 2.

107 Hdt. II, 57, 3: Ἔστι δὲ καὶ τῶν ἱρῶν ἡ μαντικὴ ἀπ' Αἰγύπτου ἀπιγμένη – «the divination from the sacrificed victim has also come from Egypt».

108 Rutherford 2001, pp. 351-353. This story was, however, of mutual benefit: if, on the one hand, Dodona's and Siwah's Egyptian origin guaranteed an international pedigree to their oracles, yet the shrine of Ammon at Thebes could claim the primacy, generating two other (foreign) sanctuaries of Zeus.

109 Parke 1967, p. 59; Rutherford 2001, p. 354.

110 The Dodonaean desire to establish connections with famous and remote sacred places and priesthood is also apparent in the foundation myth linking Dodona to the Galeotai and Telmessoi (Steph. Byz. s.v. Γαλεῶται; Moscati Castelnuovo 2014).

The connection with Ammon at Dodona appears also in the material evidence, namely the already-mentioned ram-horned Zeus Ammon decorating the rim of a bronze *situla*, believed to be from Dodona and dating to c. 450 BC and now preserved in the Louvre Museum (fig. 3)[111].

A further element indicating the Dodonaean origin of the story is the dove, which appears in all the other foundation legends and is sometimes in connection with the divination at Dodona[112]. The dove and the oak, according to Parke, might have been original elements of the Dodonaean mantic practice, but in the course of time with the decline of the oak the doves may have vanished too. «Presumably at some point in the distant past they had chosen the tree as a nesting-place and had shared in its sanctity, but as the oak decayed they may have abandoned it for other quarters»[113]. The memory of the doves remained attached to the name of the priestesses, the Peleiades[114], and to the foundation legends.

This original nucleus, i.e. a dove marking the sacred space (around a tree), persists in all the foundation legends, also those that, in the wake of Pindar[115], highlighted the Thessalian origin of Dodona.

In the 4th century BC, information on the origin of the oracle of Dodona is to be found in two Thessalian historians, Souidas and Cineas, both placing the shrine in Thessaly. Souidas, quoted by Strabo[116] and Stephanus of Byzantium, claims that

111 Pp. 90-91.

112 On the different methods of divination at Dodona see p. 95 n. 33.

113 Parke 1967, p. 75.

114 Hdt. II, 57, 1; Strabo VII, fr. 1, C 323.

115 Pind. fr. 59 and schol. Soph. *Trach*. 172.

116 Souidas *FGrHist* 602 F 11 (= Strabo VII, 7, 12, C 329): Σουίδας δὲ τοῖς Θετταλοῖς μυθώδεις λόγους προσχαριζόμενος, ἐκεῖθέν τε φησιν εἶναι τὸ ἱερὸν μετενηνεγμένον ἐκ τῆς περὶ Σκοτοῦσσαν Πελασγίας· ἔστι δ' ἡ Σκοτοῦσσα τῆς Πελασγιώτιδος Θετταλίας· συνακολουθῆσαι δὲ γυναῖκας τὰς πλείστας, ὧν ἀπογόνους εἶναι τὰς νῦν προφήτιδας· ἀπὸ δὲ τούτου καὶ Πελασγικὸν Δία κεκλῆσθαι. Κινέας δ' ἔτι μυθωδέστερον. – «Souidas, in order to court the favour of the Thessalians by fabulous stories, says that the temple was transported from Scotussa of the Thessalian Pelasgiotis, accompanied by a great multitude, chiefly of women, whose descendants are the present prophetesses, and that hence Zeus had the epithet Pelasgic. Cineas relates what is still more fabulous» [transl. M.F. Williams, "Souidas" (602), in *BNJ*].

the *polis*, the oak and the oracle of Zeus were originally located in Thessaly in the district known as Pelasgiotis and, then, moved to Epirus – πόλιν ἐν Θεσσαλίᾳ εἶναι καὶ Φηγὸν καὶ τὸ τοῦ Διὸς μαντεῖον εἰς Ἤπειρον μετενεχθῆναι. ἐκ τῆς περὶ Σκοτοῦσσαν Πελασγίας. Along with the sanctuary, some women, that is to say the predecessors of the priestesses, followed. The reasons why the sanctuary moved to Epirus are not specified. Strabo defines Souidas' account as μυθώδεις and Cineas' as «still more fabulous» – Κινέας δ' ἔτι μυθωδέστερον. Strabo's account, however, stops abruptly, and Cineas' story, which is not very different, is supplemented by Stephanus of Byzantium[117].

Not only do both historians uphold the Homeric tradition (Achilles' prayer to Zeus Dodonaeus Pelasgian) and Pindar's testimony (Dodona/Thessaly), but they go further by locating the shrine in Thessaly, priestesses included. Although very little is known about the two historians, it is generally agreed that they were both originally from Thessaly, and Cineas was also a diplomat at the court of Pyrrhus[118]. Thus, as Strabo says, each of them might have been motivated by the desire to celebrate – προσχαριζόμενος[119]– his own region and the Thessalians, by placing there the roots of the most ancient oracle of the Greek world and establishing a direct link between Dodona and Thes-

[117] Cineas *FGrHist* 603 F 3-4 (= Strabo VII, 7, 12, C 329 and Steph. Byz. s.v. Δωδώνη): (F3) Σουίδας δὲ τοῖς Θετταλοῖς μυθώδεις λόγους προσχαριζόμενος, ἐκεῖθέν τε φησιν εἶναι τὸ ἱερὸν μετενηνεγμένον ἐκ τῆς περὶ Σκοτοῦσσαν Πελασγίας· ἔστι δ' ἡ Σκοτοῦσσα τῆς Πελασγιώτιδος Θετταλίας· συνακολουθῆσαι δὲ γυναῖκας τὰς πλείστας, ὧν ἀπογόνους εἶναι τὰς νῦν προφήτιδας· ἀπὸ δὲ τούτου καὶ Πελασγικὸν Δία κεκλῆσθαι. Κινέας δ' ἔτι μυθωδέστερον. (F4) Καὶ Σουίδας δέ φησι Φηγοναίου Διὸς ἱερὸν εἶναι ἐν Θεσσαλίᾳ, καὶ τοῦτον ἐπικαλεῖσθαι. Ἕτεροι δὲ γράφουσι Βωδωναῖε· πόλιν γὰρ εἶναι Βωδώνην ὅπου τιμᾶται. Κινέας δέ φησι, πόλιν ἐν Θεσσαλίᾳ εἶναι καὶ Φηγὸν καὶ τὸ τοῦ Διὸς μαντεῖον εἰς Ἤπειρον μετενεχθῆναι. – «(F 3) Souidas, in order to court the favour of the Thessalians by fabulous stories, says that the temple was transported from Scotussa of the Thessalian Pelasgiotis, accompanied by a great multitude, chiefly of women, whose descendants are the present prophetesses, and that hence Zeus had the epithet Pelasgic. Cineas relates what is still more fabulous. (F 4) And Souidas says that the temple of Zeus Phegonaios stands in Thessaly, and that he is invoked in that place. Some others write "Bodonian": there is indeed a city Bodonê in Thessaly, where Zeus is honored. Cineas says that the city is in Thessaly, and that the oak-tree and Zeus' oracle have been moved to Epirus» [transl. Y. Benferhat, "Kineas" (603), in *BNJ*].

[118] Plut., *Pyrrh*. XIV; D'Alessandro, De Sensi Sestito 2011.

[119] Strabo VII, 7, 12, C 329.

saly on the basis of Homeric and Pindaric reminiscences. In view of the political strategy of Pyrrhus, who was very interested in justifying his sovereignty over Thessaly[120], this might have suggested an ancestral tie between Epirus and Thessaly to be exploited, as Alexander the Great did[121].

Proxenus, another historian of the court of Pyrrhus, offered his own version of the foundation of the oracle of Dodona in his *Epeirotika*. The main character of the legend is a certain Mardylas, a shepherd, who stole a herd, when pasturing his cattle around Dodona. The owner of the stolen cattle asked the god who the thief was. The answer came from an oak tree, which indicated the youngest of the attendants (= shepherds) as the guilty one. Mardylas, once discovered, in an attempt at revenge, tried to cut the tree down, but a dove stopped him before he committed such a sacrilege. The inhabitants of the place, i.e. the Epirotes, punished the thief and established priesthood in honour of the god[122].

120 D'Alessandro, De Sensi Sestito 2011.

121 Sordi 1956.

122 Proxenus *FGrHist* 703 F 7 (= schol. Hom., *Od*. XIV, 327): Ποιμὴν νέμων πρόβατα ἐν τοῖς τῆς Δωδώνης ἕλεσι τοῦ πέλας ὑφείλατο νομὴν καλλίστην, καὶ εἴρξας εἰς τὴν σφετέραν αὐλὴν ἐφύλασσεν. Ὅθεν τὸν δεσπότην φασὶ ζητεῖν παρὰ τοῖς ποιμέσι τὰ κεκλεμμένα πρόβατα, μὴ εὑρόντα δὲ ἐρωτᾶν τὸν θεὸν τίς ἐστιν ὁ κλέψας. Τότε πρῶτον, φασὶ, τὴν δρῦν φωνὴν ἀφεῖναι, ὅτι τῶν ἀκολουθούντων ὁ νεώτατος. Ἐξετάσαντα δὲ τὸ λόγιον εὑρεῖν παρὰ τῷ ποιμένι νεωστὶ βοσκήσαντι ἐν τῷ χωρίῳ· ἀκόλουθοι δὲ λέγονται οἱ ποίμενες. Ἦν δὲ τὸ ὄνομα Μαρδύλας ὁ κλέψας. Τοῦτον λέγεται προσοργισθέντα τῇ δρυὶ θελῆσαι αὐτὴν ἐκκόψαι νύκτωρ· πελειάδα δὲ ἐκ τοῦ στελέχους ἀνακύψασαν ἐπιτάξαι μὴ τοῦτο δρᾶν· τὸν δὲ δειματωθέντα μηκέτι τοῦτο τολμῆσαι, μὴ θιγεῖν τοῦ ἱεροῦ τούτου δένδρου. Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ τὸ τόλμημα μηνίσαι αὐτῷ τοὺς Ἠπειρώτας· ὅθεν καὶ λαβόντας δίκην ταύτην εἰσπράξασθαι τῆς ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ὑπομενῆς τὸν μάντιν προάγει – «A shepherd keeping his cattle in the marsh-meadows of Dodona caught the best herd of a neighbour, and having forced it into his own fold kept it. Thereupon some say a master sought the stolen cattle among the shepherds and when he failed to find it, asked the god who the thief was. That was the occasion – as some assert – an oak tree first articulated a voice, that it had been the youngest of attendants. The master analyzed the oracular response and found his cattle in the fold of the shepherd who only recently grazed in this area (the shepherds were called attendants). The thief's name was Mardylas. It is said that he was angry at the oak and wanted to cut it down by night. A dove emerging from the trunk ordered him not to cut down this oak; the attendant, having been frightened, no longer dared this [and did not touch this sacred tree]. Yet, even so due to his sacrilegious act the Epirotes cherished wrath against him. Hence, after exacting a penalty from him for his stubbornness they established a seer. The story is by Proxenus» [transl. J. Rzepka, "Proxenus" (703), in *BNJ*].

At first glance the aim of Proxenus was to stress the Epirote character of the legend to flatter his patron, i.e. the Epirote king Pyrrhus, by highlighting a few local elements, such as the major economic activity of Epirus and north-western Greece, namely sheep farming and breeding and the priesthood established by the Epirotes. However, the story might, through the name of the protagonist, also contain Thessalian reminiscences that connect Dodona with Thessaly. Mardylas is a *hapax*. No other mention of this name appears in literary or epigraphic sources, but another name, with the same root, i.e. Mardylis, is attested, although only once, in a 3rd century BC inscription found in Mylai[123] in the Thessalian district of Perrhaebia. Although this might be a coincidence, it cannot be ruled out that Proxenos intentionally modified the story of the woodcutter[124] Hellos, here named Mardylas, referring to the Pindaric tradition through the Thessalian name of the thief.

In the 1st-2nd centuries AD, Plutarch in his *Life of Pyrrhus* offered what is apparently an alternative legend for the foundation of the oracle, having as protagonists Deucalion and Pyrrha[125]. After the deluge Deucalion[126], the Greek Noah, reached Dodona – elsewhere Deucalion's ark landed in Mount Parnassos[127] – and a dove sitting on a tree told him to settle

[123] *IG* IX, 2 332; *LGPN* III.B (1).

[124] Here the woodcutting is an action and not the profession of the protagonist of the story.

[125] Plut., *Pyrrh*. I, 1: Θεσπρωτῶν καὶ Μολοσσῶν μετὰ τὸν κατακλυσμὸν ἱστοροῦσι Φαέθοντα βασιλεῦσαι πρῶτον, ἕνα τῶν μετὰ Πελασγοῦ παραγενομένων εἰς τὴν Ἤπειρον· ἔνιοι δὲ Δευκαλίωνα καὶ Πύρραν εἰσαμένους τὸ περὶ Δωδώνην ἱερὸν αὐτόθι κατοικεῖν ἐν Μολοσσοῖς. – «Some report that the first king of the Thesprotians and Molossians after the flood was Phaethon, one of those who came into Epirus with Pelasgos; but others say that Deucalion and Pyrrha established the sanctuary at Dodona and dwelt there among the Molossians». According to another version of the myth attributed to Thrasybulos, possibly an author of the Hellenistic time, Deucalion married not Pyrrha, but Dodona, an Oceanid nymph, daughter of Zeus, naming the place (schol. Hom., *Il.* XVI, 233; Steph. Byz. s.v. Δωδώνη; Parke 1969, pp. 40-42).

[126] Deucalion was originally a Locrian hero that was absorbed into Thessalian mythology when the Aleuadae started their domination of Delphi (Hall 2002, pp. 30-31 and pp. 134-54; Hall 2009, pp. 608-609).

[127] Apollod. I, 7, 2.

in the spot[128], where he established the oracular sanctuary and started living there with the Molossians[129].

As Deucalion often had the role of initiator of rites and religious habits[130], his participation in the foundation of the first oracle of the Greek world is not that striking. More intriguing is the presence of his wife, Pyrrha, whose name recalls the founder of the Molossian royal family, of the Aleuadae and more specifically of the protagonist of this Plutarchan *Life*. At the opening of the *Life of Pyrrhus*, he tells the legendary history of Molossia, alluding to several mythological figures, Phaedon and Pelasgos, Deucalion, Pyrrha and Neoptolemus-Pyrrhus – the heroic ancestor of the Molossian royal family, all of whom share Thessalian connections: Pelasgos was the eponym of the Pelasgians, who traditionally lived in Thessaly; Pyrrha lived in Phthia, a sub-region of Thessaly, from where Achilles came, and Achilles himself, the father of Neoptolemus-Pyrrhus, when on the island of Scyros, disguised in female clothing, was named Pyrrha[131]. Last but not least, Deucalion and Pyrrha's son was Hellenos, eponymous hero of the Hellenes, who, according to Aristotle, originally lived around Dodona[132]. Thus, once again, one of the legends of the foundation of the oracle contains Homeric and Thessalian elements, relating the sanctuary of Dodona to Thessaly.

From this survey of the legends of the foundation of the oracle, two main traditions emerge: they were established at two separate moments during the life of the sanctuary and reveal different purposes. On the one hand, Herodotus' and Pindar's accounts of the Egyptian origin of the oracle depended on local

[128] Schol. Hom., *Il*. XVI, 233: Ζεῦ ἄνα Δωδωναῖε. Ἐν χωρίῳ τῶν Ὑπερβορέων τῇ Δωδώνῃ τιμώμενε. Τίς δέ ἐστιν ὁ τοῦ Δωδωναίου Διὸς λόγος, καὶ ὁ τόπος, ἐξ οὗ αὐτὸν ἐπικαλεῖται οὕτως; Δευκαλίων, μετὰ τὸν ἐπ' αὐτοῦ γενόμενον κατακλυσμὸν, παραγενόμενος εἰς τὴν Ἤπειρον ἐμαντεύετο ἐν τῇ δρυΐ. Πελειάδος δὲ χρησμὸν αὐτῷ δούσης, κατοικίζει τὸν τόπον, συναθροίσας τοὺς περιλειφθέντας ἀπὸ τοῦ κατακλυσμοῦ, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ Διὸς, καὶ Δωδώνης, μιᾶς τῶν Ὠκεανίδων, Δωδώνην τὴν χώραν προσηγόρευσαν. Ἱστορεῖ Θρασύβουλος.

[129] Likewise Arist., *Met*. I, 14, 352 a-b.

[130] His descendants in general were officials of the cult he founded (Rudhardt 1970, p. 12).

[131] Eurip., *Skyriai* fr. 683-686 (Nauck²); Hygin., *Fab*. 96.

[132] Arist., *Met*. I, 14, 352 a-b.

tradition and focused on the antiquity of the shrine. It is legitimate to assume that the core of the story, i.e. the doves from Egypt, developed internally, from those intimately connected to the oracle – the officials of Dodona.

In Pindar another theme, i.e. the Thessalian origin of the priests (Helloi), gave rise to a second strand, which evoked and emphasized at different levels the ancestral connection between Dodona/Molossia and Thessaly, so much so that according to Hyginus, the temple of Dodona was raised by Thessalos[133]. Whereas Pindar aimed at celebrating the Aleuadae' origins and at tying the Thessalian *tagai* with the most ancient oracle of the Greek world, Souidas, Cineas, Proxenus, as well as Plutarch, celebrated the ties between Dodona, the major political and religious centre of the Molossians, and Thessaly. These legends, which attempted to legitimise Molossian/Epirote authority and power beyond the borders of Epirus, were an expression of the political and economic growth of Epirus in the 4th century BC, which culminated in the rise of Pyrrhus in the 3rd century BC[134].

[133] Hygin., *Fab*. 225 – *Thessalus templum Iovis Dodonaei in terra Molossorum*.
[134] Piccinini 2016a.

Chapter 7

So Far and Yet So Near: Athens and Dodona

A 4th Century Ardent Devotion

Around 330-324 BC Hyperides, in his speech in defence of Euxenippos[1] accused *inter alia* for having been pro-Macedonian – or at the very least too acquiescent to Olympias –, mentions both an oracle from Zeus Dodonaeus ordering the *polis* to «adorn» the statue of Dione[2], as well as the consequent pious reaction of the Athenians[3]. Athens had received these instructions probably

[1] Whitehead 2000, pp. 155-157.

[2] According to Strabo (VII, 7, 12, C 329), at a certain point its cult was established at Dodona and the goddess became a temple-associate of Zeus. On the introduction of the cult of Dione at Dodona, Parke 1967, pp. 69-70.

[3] Hyp., *Pro Eux*. 24-26: Ὀλυμπιὰς ἐγκλήματα πεποίηται περὶ τὰ ἐν Δωδώνῃ οὐ δίκαια, ὡς ἐγὼ δὶς ἤδη ἐν τῶι δήμωι ἐναντίον ὑμῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων Ἀθηναίων πρὸς τοὺς ἥκοντας παρ' αὐτῆς ἐξήλεγξα οὐ προσήκοντα αὐτὴν ἐγκλήματα τῇ πόλει ἐγκαλοῦσαν. ὑμῖν γὰρ ὁ Ζεὺς ὁ Δωδωναῖος προσέταξεν ἐν τῆι μαντείαι τὸ ἄγαλμα τῆς Διώνης ἐπικοσμῆσαι· καὶ ὑμεῖς πρόσωπόν τε ποιησάμενοι ὡς οἷόν τε κάλλιστον καὶ τἆλλα πάντα τὰ ἀκόλουθα, καὶ κόσμον πολὺν καὶ πολυτελῆ τῆι θεῶι παρασκευάσαντες, καὶ θεωρίαν καὶ θυσίαν πολλῶν χρημάτων ἀποστείλαντες, ἐπεκοσμήσατε τὸ ἔδος τῆς Διώνης ἀξίως καὶ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν καὶ τῆς θεοῦ. ὑπὲρ τούτων ὑμῖν τὰ ἐγκλήματα ἦλθε παρ' Ὀλυμπιάδος ἐν ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς, ὡς ἡ χώρα εἴη ἡ Μολοττία αὐτῆς, ἐν ᾗ τὸ ἱερόν ἐστιν· οὔκουν προσήκε<ι>ν ἡμᾶς τῶν ἐκεῖ οὐδὲ ἓν κινεῖν. ἐὰν μὲν τοίνυν τὰ περὶ τὴν φιάλην γεγονότα ἐν ἀδικήματι ψηφίσησθε εἶναι, τρόπον τινὰ καὶ ἡμῶν αὐτῶν καταγιγνώσκομεν ὡς τὰ ἐκεῖ οὐκ ὀρθῶς ἐπράξαμεν· ἐὰν δ' ἐπὶ τοῦ γεγενημένου ἐῶμεν, τὰς τραγῳδίας αὐτῆς καὶ τὰς κατηγορίας ἀφῃρηκότες ἐσόμεθα. οὐ γὰρ δήπου Ὀλυμπιάδι μὲν τὰ Ἀθήνησιν ἱερὰ ἐπικοσμεῖν ἔξεστιν, ἡμῖν δὲ τὰ ἐν Δωδώνῃ οὐκ ἐξέσται, καὶ ταῦτα τοῦ θεοῦ προστάξαντος – «Olympias has made complaints against you about the incident at Dodona: complaints which are unfair, as I have twice already proved in the Assembly before yourselves and the rest of Athens. I explained to her envoys that the charges she brings against the city are not justified. For Zeus of Dodona commanded you through the oracle to embellish the statue of Dione. You made a face as beautiful as

after 331 BC, when Olympias became regent in Molossia with her daughter Cleopatra, widow of Alexander the Molossian[4]. The Athenians did much more than what the oracle had requested, i.e. the embellishment of the statue of Dione, by also offering a procession and an expensive sacrifice. All this provoked the anger of Olympias, who wrote letters of complaint against the *polis*, pointing out that, since the shrine was in Molossia, the Athenians «had no right to stir up anything there». These complaints were judged as inappropriate by Hyperides, as, at some time before, no opposition to Olympias' dedication of a bowl to Hygieia on the Acropolis was made by the Athenians[5]. If Olympias could embellish the temple in Athens, the Athenians could do the same in Dodona, especially when the god had commanded it[6].

Besides the Athenian consultation, *theoria* and generous donation, it is important here to stress the oracle's request to a geographically distant state and the Athenian readiness to respond positively.

The wrangle between Olympias and the Athenians is a key event, testifying to the close ties and customary relationships between Dodona and the Athenians in the 4th century, a matter confirmed by several other sources too. Demosthenes often

you could, together with all the other appropriate parts; and having prepared a great deal of expensive finery for the goddess and dispatched envoys with a sacrifice at great expense, you embellished the statue of Dione in a manner worthy of yourselves and of the goddess. These measures brought you the complaints of Olympias, who said in her letters that the country of Molossia, in which the temple stands, belonged to her, and that therefore we had no right to interfere with anything there at all. Now if you decide that the incidents relating to the cup constitute an offence, we are in a sense condemning ourselves as being wrong in what we did at Dodona. But if we acquiesce in what has been done, we shall have taken away her right to these theatrical complaints and accusations. For I presume that when Olympias can furnish ornaments for shrines in Athens, we may safely do so at Dodona, particularly when the god demands it» (transl. J.O. Burtt).

[4] *SEG* IX, 2 (= Rhodes, Osborne 2003, pp. 486-493 no. 96); Plut., *Alex*. LXVIII, 3; Liv. VIII, 24, 17; Meyer 2013, p. 122.

[5] Olympias probably donated a silver or gold bowl to Hygieia, whose worship in the Acropolis is attested by Pausanias (I, 23,4). For hypotheses on the reasons of Olympias' dedication and on the relationships between Macedonia and Dodona, respectively Whitehead 2000, p. 216 and Mari 2002, p. 255 n. 1.

[6] Whitehead 2000, pp. 223-227; Parker 2005, pp. 87-88; Mikalson 2016, p. 32, p. 162 and p. 261; Piccinini 2016a, pp. 166-168.

mentions the oracle of Dodona, Zeus Dodonaeus and Dione – both in his speeches and, if they are authentic, his letters too[7], but he rarely gives precise information, on the occasion of the consultations or the prophetic responses. The oracle and the divine couple are mentioned as having predicted good fortune to the *polis*[8] without any precise details by which the prophecies could be fixed chronologically. In one case, Demosthenes refers to Zeus Dodonaeus and other gods that exhorted the Athenians «to punish with one mind those who have made themselves the servants» of the enemies of Athens[9]. More vaguely in the Demosthenic *Epistulae*, Zeus Dodonaeus and Dione, along with Apollo Pythios and other *manteia*, are listed among the oracles often consulted by the Athenians[10]. The familiarity between the *polis* of Athens and Dodona is also illustrated in *in Midiam*[11], dated to 347 BC, where Demosthenes reports in detail two oracles of Zeus Dodonaeus, alongside one of Delphi, concerning the Dionysia, but even here the occasion of the consultation is

7 Schaefer 1858, p. 111, p. 178, p. 214, p. 257; Goldstein 1968, p. 93, p. 65, pp. 276-281; Sealey 1993, pp. 221-222, pp. 230-239; Clavaud 1987, pp. 1-61, part. pp. 59-61; Long 2004, p. 102; Trapp 2003, p. 12; MacDowell 2009, pp. 408-409.

8 Demosth. XVIII, 253, 3; XVI, 18.

9 Demosth. XIX, 299: φησὶ δέ γ' ἡ μαντεία δεῖν ὅπως ἂν μὴ χαίρωσιν οἱ ἐχθροὶ ποιεῖν. ἅπασι τοίνυν μιᾷ γνώμῃ παρακελεύεται κολάζειν τοὺς ὑπηρετηκότας τι τοῖς ἐχθροῖς ὁ Ζεύς, ἡ Διώνη, πάντες οἱ θεοί. ἔξωθεν οἱ ἐπιβουλεύοντες, ἔνδοθεν οἱ συμπράττοντες. οὐκοῦν τῶν ἐπιβουλευόντων μὲν ἔργον διδόναι, τῶν συμπραττόντων δὲ λαμβάνειν καὶ τοὺς εἰληφότας ἐκσῴζειν – «But the oracle bids you strive that the enemy shall not rejoice. Therefore, you are all exhorted by Zeus, by Dione, by all the gods, to punish with one mind those who have made themselves the servants of your enemies. There are foes without; there are traitors within. It is the business of foes to give bribes, of traitors to take bribes, and to rescue those who have taken them» (transl. C.A. Vince, J.H. Vince). Confirmed by Dinarch I, 78: Ἀκούσατ' ὦ Ἀθηναῖοι κἀκείνου τοῦ ψηφίσματος τοῦ γραφέντος ὑπὸ Δημοσθένους, ὃ τεταραγμένης τῆς πόλεως μετὰ τὴν ἐν Χαιρωνείᾳ μάχην ἔγραψεν ὁ δημοτικὸς οὑτος, καὶ τῆς μαντείας τῆς ἐλθούσης ἐκ Δωδώνης παρὰ τοῦ Διὸς τοῦ Δωδωναίου· σαφῶς γὰρ ὑμῖν πάλαι προείρηκε φυλάττεσθαι τοὺς ἡγεμόνας καὶ τοὺς συμβούλους. λέγε τὴν μαντείαν πρῶτον – «I want you also, Athenians, to hear that other decree moved by Demosthenes, the decree which this democratic statesman proposed when the city was in disorder after the battle of Chaeronea, and also the oracle sent from Dodona from Dodonian Zeus; for it has long been warning you clearly to beware of your leaders and advisers. Read the oracle first» (transl. J.O. Burtt).

10 Demosth., *Epist.* I, 14; IV, 3.

11 Demosth. XXI, 51-54.

not specified[12]. These oracles are reported *verbatim* and though there is always the possibility that they are later inventions, the detailed descriptions of the sacrificial instructions may be an argument in support of their authenticity. They run thus: «To the people of Athens, the oracle of Zeus commands that since you have neglected the times of sacrifice and of sacred missions, nine chosen sacred envoys be sent and that these men promptly sacrifice with good omens to Zeus three oxen and for each ox three pigs, and an ox to Dione and set up a bronze table for the dedications that the Athenian people have made. The oracle of Zeus commands the performance of sacrifices at Dodona to sovereign Dionysus, and to fill mixing bowls, and to establish dances, and to wear crowns, both free and slaves, and to take rest for one day; to sacrifice an ox to Apollo, the Averter of Evil and a white ox to Zeus, Protector of Wealth»[13] (transl. E.M. Harris).

The possibility that Demosthenes at times quoted old oracles out of context or even manufactured some does not necessarily weaken the overall value of the information: an orator, as good as he was, was certainly aware of his audience's acquaintance with the topic. At the very least, then, the Athenians must have been aware of regular contacts between the *polis* and Dodona.

Such a line of reasoning is corroborated by the closure of Xenophon's *De vectigalibus*[14], dating to 355 BC. The historian

[12] The oracles of Dodona are reported in prose, that of Apollo in hexameters.

[13] Demosth. XXI, 51-54: Τῷ δήμῳ τῷ Ἀθηναίων ὁ τοῦ Διὸς σημαίνει. ὅτι τὰς ὥρας παρηνέγκατε τῆς θυσίας καὶ τῆς θεωρίας, αἱρετοὺς πέμπειν κελεύει θεωροὺς ἕνεκα τούτου διὰ ταχέων, <καὶ> τῷ Διὶ τῷ Ναΐῳ τρεῖς βοῦς καὶ πρὸς ἑκάστῳ βοΐ δύο οἷς, τῇ Διώνῃ βοῦν καλλιερεῖν, καὶ τράπεζαν χαλκῆν [καὶ] πρὸς τὸ ἀνάθημα ὃ ἀνέθηκεν ὁ δῆμος ὁ Ἀθηναίων. Ὁ τοῦ Διὸς σημαίνει ἐν Δωδώνῃ, Διονύσῳ δημοτελῆ ἱερὰ τελεῖν καὶ κρατῆρα κεράσαι καὶ χοροὺς ἱστάναι, Ἀπόλλωνι ἀποτροπαίῳ βοῦν θῦσαι, καὶ στεφανηφορεῖν ἐλευθέρους καὶ δούλους, καὶ ἐλινύειν μίαν ἡμέραν. Διὶ κτησίῳ βοῦν λευκόν.

[14] Xen., *De vect.* 6: Ἀλλ' εἴ γε μὴν τῶν εἰρημένων ἀδύνατον μὲν μηδέν ἐστι μηδὲ χαλεπόν, πραττομένων δὲ αὐτῶν προσφιλέστεροι μὲν τοῖς Ἕλλησι γενησόμεθα, ἀσφαλέστερον δὲ οἰκήσομεν, εὐκλεέστεροι δὲ ἐσόμεθα, καὶ ὁ μὲν δῆμος τροφῆς εὐπορήσει, οἱ δὲ πλούσιοι τῆς εἰς τὸν πόλεμον δαπάνης ἀπαλλαγήσονται, περιουσίας δὲ πολλῆς γενομένης μεγαλοπρεπέστερον μὲν ἔτι ἢ νῦν ἑορτὰς ἄξομεν, ἱερὰ δ' ἐπισκευάσομεν, τείχη δὲ καὶ νεώρια ἀνορθώσομεν, ἱερεῦσι δὲ καὶ βουλῇ καὶ ἀρχαῖς καὶ ἱππεῦσι τὰ πάτρια ἀποδώσομεν, πῶς οὐκ ἄξιον ὡς τάχιστα τούτοις ἐγχειρεῖν, ἵνα ἔτι ἐφ' ἡμῶν ἐπίδωμεν τὴν πόλιν μετ' ἀσφαλείας εὐδαιμονοῦσαν;

concludes his pamphlets by coupling, once again, Delphi and Dodona as the oracles to be consulted for important (public) matters: after proposing financial changes to increase the supply of liquid assests for the *polis*, Xenophon suggests sending messengers to Dodona and Delphi to seek the gods' approval. On obtaining the divine endorsement, the ambassadors should also ask to what gods sacrifice should be made in order to «prosper in our handiwork». Xenophon's inclusion of Dodona alongside Delphi probably reflects the Athenian contemporary habit of consulting either one of the two, or both, on public matters.

Such a picture of regular contacts, consultations, sacrifices, rich donations and sacred *theoriai* of Athenians at Dodona, as outlined by literary evidence[15], is further confirmed by 4th century archaeological and epigraphical evidence found within the *temenos*: they consist of a few masks, mostly portraying

εἴ γε μὴν ταῦτα δόξειεν ὑμῖν πράττειν, συμβουλεύσαιμ' ἂν ἔγωγε πέμψαντας καὶ εἰς Δωδώνην καὶ εἰς Δελφοὺς ἐπερέσθαι τοὺς θεοὺς εἰ λῷον καὶ ἄμεινον εἴη ἂν τῇ πόλει οὕτω κατασκευαζομένῃ καὶ αὐτίκα καὶ εἰς τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον. εἰ δὲ ταῦτα συναινοῖεν, τότ' ἂν αὖ φαίην χρῆναι ἐπερωτᾶν τίνας θεῶν προσποιούμενοι ταῦτα κάλλιστα καὶ ἄριστα πράττοιμεν ἄν· οὓς δ' ἀνέλοιεν θεούς, τούτοις εἰκὸς καλλιερήσαντας ἄρχεσθαι τοῦ ἔργου. σὺν γὰρ θεῷ πραττομένων εἰκὸς καὶ τὰς πράξεις προϊέναι ἐπὶ τὸ λῷον καὶ ἄμεινον ἀεὶ τῇ πόλει – «Well now, surely, if none of these proposals is impossible or even difficult, if by carrying them into effect we shall be regarded with more affection by the Greeks, shall live in greater security, and be more glorious; if the people will be maintained in comfort and the rich no more burdened with the expenses of war; if with a large surplus in hand, we shall celebrate our festivals with even more splendour than at present, shall restore the temples, and repair the walls and docks, and shall give back to priests, councillors, magistrates, knights their ancient privileges; surely, I say, our proper course is to proceed with this scheme forthwith, that already in our generation we may come to see our city secure and prosperous. Furthermore, if you decide to go forward with the plan, I should advise you to send to Dodona and Delphi, and inquire of the gods whether such a design is fraught with weal for the state both now and in days to come. And should they consent to it, then I would say that we ought to ask them further, which of the gods we must propitiate in order that we may prosper in our handiwork. Then, when we have offered an acceptable sacrifice to the gods named in their reply, it behoves us to begin the work. For with heaven to help us in what we do, it is likely that our undertakings will go forward continually to the greater weal of the state» (transl. E.C. Marchant).

[15] Among the evidence attesting 4th century Athenian enquiries at Dodona, there is also an oracle on the safety of the cult of Artemis at Mounichia (Plut., *Phoc.* VIII, 4).

heads of gods, decorating bronze vases[16] and a few oracular tablets, all attesting instances of Athenian private devotion[17].

To this cluster of evidence, a further group of inscriptions attesting to the cult of Dione in the Acropolis and dating to the last years of the 5th century and into the 4th century BC, should be added. Two decrees relating to the Erechtheion, dating respectively to 409/8 and 408/7 BC, mention a few times an altar of Dione to the East of the Erechtheion[18]. Moreover, in the 4th century BC, a marble chair from the theatre of Dionysus was also dedicated to Dione, by Phile, daughter of Niketos, likely a priestess of the goddess – τῆι Δ[ιώ]νηι Φίλη Νικήτου ἀνέ[θηκε —][19].

This evidence is not *per se* sufficient to prove that a cult of Dione was, at some time, introduced into Athens from Dodona; a separate, local worship of the goddess, with no link to Zeus Naios[20], might have preceded the earliest contacts with the Epirote sanctuary. Indeed, in this latter case, a pre-existing Athenian cult of Dione might have contributed to the growth and popularity of the shrine among the Athenians.

However that may be, Zeus Dodonaeus certainly had a role in relation to the cult of Bendis, introduced into Attica at some point in the 5th century BC[21]. A decree (*IG* II^2 1283)[22] mentioning the oracle of Dodona in connection with the worship of Bendis dates to 263/2 BC, but refers to a consultation that happened in the past, certainly before the mid 3rd century BC. It begins «since to the Thracians alone of all foreign peoples (*ethne*) has the Athenian *demos* granted the right to acquire land and found

16 Athens, NM 19, 74, 75, 76, 78, 80 and 452 (inscribed dedication with the name and ethnic of the devotee: Φιλῖνος Ἀθηναῖος); Louvre LO MNC 1242. One of the *thesauroi* in the *temenos* might have been built by the Athenians (Quantin 2008, p. 25; Piccinini 2016a, *passim*).

17 Lhôte 2006, no. 23 (Διόγνητος Ἀριστομήδου Ἀθηναῖος); Lhôte 2006, no. 103 and no. 108 in Attic dialect.

18 *IG I*^{3} 475 and *IG I*^{3} 476.

19 Athens, Acr. Mus. 4047; *IG* II^2 4643; Palagia 2002; Parker 2005, p. 108 n. 64.

20 A 1nd century BC altar to Zeus Naios bearing an inscription was found on the Acropolis, West of the Parthenon (Athens, Acr. Mus. 1001; *IG* II^2 4707): Διὶ Ναίῳ / [κ]αὶ τῇ συν- / όδῳ Μέλ- / λπων Κα[λ]- / [λ]ιξέν[ου] / [Πρ]οβ[α]λί- / σιος εὐ- / ξάμ[ε]- / νο[ς] ἀν[έ]- / θηκεν.

21 *Supra*.

22 Appendix "Dodona and the cult of Bendis in Attic Inscriptions", n. 2.

a shrine, in accord with the response from Dodona, and to conduct a procession from the prytaneion-hearth, etc.» – ἐπειδὴ τοῦ δήμου τοῦ Ἀθηναίων δεδωκότος τοῖς Θραιξὶ μ / όνοις τῶν ἄλλων ἐθνῶν τὴν ἔγκτησιν καὶ τὴν ἵδρυσιν τοῦ / ἱεροῦ κατὰ τὴν μ[α]ντείαν τὴν ἐγ Δωδώνης καὶ τὴν πονπὴν π / ένπειν ἀπὸ τῆς ἑστίας τῆς ἐκκ τοῦ πρυτανείου κτλ.

The oracle was, thus, involved in the foundation of the shrine, though not in the introduction of the cult of Bendis into Attica, where it was already well-established by 429 BC[23].

A fragmentary 5th century text concerning Bendis (*IG* I³ 136)[24], found on the south-west side of the Mounichia hill in 1930, where Xenophon places the Bendideion[25], mentions a question put to an unspecified oracle about, it seems, some issues about the choice of a priestess – εἴτε χρὲ γυναῖκα *h*ιερεος […[26]. The dating of *IG* I³ 136 has been long debated by modern scholars[27], who are now inclined to associate it with the new festival of Bendis mentioned at the beginning of Plato's *Republic* (410 BC) and to assign it to 413/2. Since the procession described by Plato and probably mentioned in *IG* I³ 136 had as its destination the sanctuary of Bendis in the Piraeus, the oracle from Dodona attested in *IG* II² 1283, assigning the land for a sanctuary of Bendis, must have been uttered at some point before 413/2 BC. This conclusion presupposes the historical reliability of *IG* II² 1283 and the fact that both inscriptions *IG* II² 1283 and *IG* I³ 136 might have referred to the same sanctuary.

Thus, *IG* I³ 136 attests certainly an oracular consultation relating to the cult of Bendis in Attica, probably in the late

[23] The first piece of evidence of a cult of Bendis in Athens is in the accounts of the treasurers of the Other Gods in 429 BC (*IG* I³ 383, ll. 142-143). It is likely that the cult of Bendis was introduced in Athens before the foundation of the treasury in 434/3 BC (*IG* I³ 52), when also, at around the same time, Bendis appears on two vases, on one of them linked with Themis (Goceva, Popov 1986, nos. 1-2).

[24] Appendix "Dodona and the cult of Bendis in Attic Inscriptions", n. 1.

[25] Xen., *Hell.* II, 4, 11.

[26] *IG* I³ 136, l. 29.

[27] The dating of the inscription and the motivations behind the introduction of the cult in Attica have been object of an intense debate. Pappadakis 1937, pp. 808-823; Ferguson 1949, pp. 96-104; Bingen 1959, pp. 31-44; Garland 1992, pp. 111-114; Parker 1996, pp. 170-175, pp. 194-198; Planeaux 2000; Ondine Pache 2001, pp. 3-11; Wijma 2014, pp. 139-145; Mikalson 2016, pp. 179-180.

5th century, and since the oracle in *IG* II² 1283 was of Zeus Dodonaeus, this piece of evidence might refer to the first Athenian public consultation at Dodona in the late 5th century, perhaps in 413/2 BC, that is to say before the construction of the Bendideion.

But was this (one of) the first Athenian consultation(s) at Dodona? When did the Athenians start to visit the shrine? Is it possible to date and frame historically the first contacts between the Athenians and Dodona?

The First Contacts

The first Athenian, as far as we know, to have ever set foot in Molossia and to have consulted the shrine is Themistocles. According to Thucydides[28], soon after his ostracism – which should be dated in late 470s-early 460 BC[29], he fled first to Corcyra, of which he was *euergetes*[30], then reached Molossia[31]. The Corcyraeans «conveyed him to the continent opposite», not wishing to offend the Athenians and the Spartans[32]. Plutarch[33], relying possibly on Phaenias of Eresus[34], enriches the account of Themistocles' flight by reporting that during his stay in

[28] Thuc. I, 136; Hornblower 1991, p. 220. Also Diod. XI, 56, 1.

[29] On the chronology of Themistocles' flight Lenardon 1959, pp. 23-48; Cortassa, Culasso Gastaldi 1990, pp. 223-225; Marotta 2001-2002, pp. 123-125.

[30] Thuc. I, 136, 1; Plut., *Them*. XXIV, 1-2; Piccirilli 1973a, p. 13 and pp. 61-66; Fantasia 2017, pp. 24-25.

[31] Thuc. I, 136, 2-4; Aristodemos *FGrHist* 104 F 1; Plut., *Them*. XXIV, 1; Nep., *Them*. VIII, 3; Ael. Arist. XLVI, 233-234; Piccirilli 1973b, pp. 317-355; Culasso Gastaldi 1986, pp. 133-163.

[32] Thuc. I, 136, 1.

[33] Plut., *Them*. XXVIII, 5: ταῦτ' εἰπὼν ὁ Θεμιστοκλῆς ἐπεθείασε τῷ λόγῳ, προσδιελθὼν τὴν ὄψιν ἣν εἶδεν ἐν Νικογένους καὶ τὸ μάντευμα τοῦ Δωδωναίου Διός, ὡς κελευσθεὶς πρὸς τὸν ὁμώνυμον τοῦ θεοῦ βαδίζειν, συμφρονήσειε πρὸς ἐκεῖνον ἀναπέμπεσθαι· μεγάλους γὰρ ἀμφοτέρους εἶναί τε καὶ λέγεσθαι βασιλέας – «After these words Themistocles spoke of divine portents in his favour, enlarging upon the vision which he saw at the house of Nicogenes, and the oracle of Dodonaean Zeus, how when he was bidden by it to proceed to the namesake of the god, he had concluded that he was thereby sent to him, since both were actually *Great Kings*, and were so addressed» (transl. B. Perrin).

[34] Mentioned little before (Plut., *Them*. XXVII, 8), and largely used in the *Life of Themistocles* (Carena, Manfredini, Piccirilli 1983, pp. XLI-XLII and pp. 276-277).

Molossia, he consulted the oracle of Dodona, which suggested that he find asylum at the place of someone having the same name as the god. Themistocles interpreted the oracle as an invitation to get himself to the Persian king, who was known as and called "Great King".

Themistocles' visit to Dodona is plausible, being the shrine of the major religious centre of the region. The circumstances of Themistocles, who happened (he had not planned it) to be in Molossia, suggest that his enquiry was a personal choice, rather than a consequence of Athenian familiarity with the shrine in the first half of the 5th century BC.

At that time Dodona had not yet attracted Athenian attention, though contacts with the Molossians were already under way. Thucydides writes that Themistocles «was compelled to stop at the house of Admetus, the Molossian king, who was not his friend[35]». Plutarch and a *scholion* to Thucydides clarify the background of this relationship[36]: Admetus some time before had asked the Athenians to be his allies, but Themistocles rejected the request[37]. This episode clearly precedes Themistocles' arrival in Molossia and should be dated soon after the

[35] Thuc. I, 136, 2: καὶ διωκόμενος ὑπὸ τῶν προστεταγμένων κατὰ πύστιν ᾗ χωροίη, ἀναγκάζεται κατά τι ἄπορον παρὰ Ἄδμητον τὸν Μολοσσῶν βασιλέα ὄντα αὐτῷ οὐ φίλον καταλῦσαι.

[36] Plut., *Them*. XXIV, 2-3; schol. Thuc. I, 136, 2 (οὐ φίλον: πέμψαντος γάρ ποτε Ἀδμήτου Ἀθήναζε περὶ συμμαχίας αἰτήσεως ὁ Θεμιστοκλῆς ἀνέπεισε τὴν πόλιν μὴ δοῦναι αὐτῷ βοήθειαν, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οὐκ ἦν αὐτῷ φίλος – «not friend: in fact when Admetus sent an embassy in Athens to ask for an alliance, Themistocles convinced the city not to give him help, and for this reason he was not his friend»); also schol. Ael. Arist., *Tett*. 233, 17. Apparently of different opinion is Nepos, according to whom there was a guest-friendship between them (*Them*. VIII, 3). However, there are doubts about the correct transmission of the text (*ad Admetum, Molossum regem, cum quo ei hospitium erat, confugit*), in which probably a *non* is missing between *hospitium* and *erat* (Carena, Manfredini, Piccirilli 1983, p. 271). Admetus' request is historical, according to Piccirilli 1973b, pp. 348-351 and Funke 2000a, pp. 117-118; rather skeptical Fantasia 2011, p. 259 n. 39.

[37] Although, as Hammond (1967, p. 492) points out, «there is perhaps little point in speculating on what they may have been», the reasons' of Themistocles' opposition might have lain in his plan to maximise Athenian sea power, especially in the Aegean. Therefore, the establishment of good relationships with continental populations in the North-West, as the Molossians were, was not a priority (Lepore 1962, pp. 150-151).

battle of Salamis in 480 BC, when his prestige and authority in Athens were unchallenged[38].

From c. 450 BC the Athenians began to interact actively with north-western Greece, as is indicated by Pericles' engagements in Acarnania[39]. At that time strict relationships between the Athenians and the Molossians were not yet established; the contacts became closer during the reign of Tharyps/Arybbas[40], son of Admetus, who was educated in Athens[41] and was granted Athenian citizenship in c. 428-424 BC[42].

Nevertheless, around the mid 5th century BC Dodona started to attract more and more Athenian attention, as testified by the increasingly core role played by the sanctuary in many dramas.

Whereas Aeschylus' *Supplices*, dating to 460s[43], contains only a marginal allusion to the "Dodonaean mountains"

38 Carena, Manfredini, Piccirilli 1983, p. 271.

39 Thuc. I, 108, 5; II, 68, 3-7; Diod. XI, 84-85; Paus. IV, 25; Salmon 1984, p. 278; Hornblower 1991, pp. 351-354; Fantasia 2003, pp. 510-516.

40 The Molossians supported the Peloponnesian League during the first phases of the Peloponnesian War. At that time they were led not by a member of the Molossian royal family, but by Sabylinthos, «the guardian of king Tharyps who was still a minor» (Thuc. II, 80, 6).

41 Iust. XVII, 13, 11: *Athenas quoque erudiendi gratia missus*. Also Allan 2000, p. 154.

42 *IG* II^3 411 = *IG* II^2 226, l. 4; Osborne 1983, pp. 29-30 T6; Piccinini 2015b, pp. 471-473. According to Osborne (1983, p. 29), Tharyps could have been a minor, thus still being in Athens, at the time of his citizenship grant, since «in the case of monarchs, with whom Athens desired good relations and who were unlikely to need their citizenship as a practical benefit, such technicalities were doubtless capable of being ignored». Later in the 4th century BC, his son Alcetas obtained the citizenship (*IG* II^2 226 = *IG* II^3 1, 411) and in c. 375 BC Alcetas and Neoptolemus of Molossia joined the Second Athenian League (Rhodes, Osborne 2003, n. 22 ll. 109-110). The find of a 4th century BC pentelic marble relief bearing the inscription Ζεὺς Νάϊος. Διώνη (Athens, Acr. M., no. 4887; *BE* XXX, 1917, p. 415; Palagia 2002; Tzouvara-Souli 2004, p. 542), might be connected with the decrees granting Athenian citizenship to one (or more) Molossian king(s) (Piccinini 2015b). That the background of this grantee was Epirote is corroborated by the recent publication of several pedimental *stelai* from north-western Greece with similar tympanon (*IAlbania*, pl. 8-11, 13, 17-19, 34, 42-43, 46).

43 Apart from Scullion, who attempts to re-date the tragedy to c. 475 BC on stylistic grounds because of doubts about the papyrus transmitting the play (Scullion 2002, pp. 87-100), the great majority of scholars date Aeschylus' *Supplices* in the 460s or little earlier: Garvie 1969, pp. 1-162 and Mitchell 2006, p. 205 in the late 460s; Taplin 1977, pp. 194-198 and Friis Johanse, Whittle 1980, pp. 22-23 between 466 and 459 BC.

surrounding the shrine – ὄρη τε Δωδωναῖα[44], Dodona plays a key role in the narrative of Io's myth[45] brought to the stage in Aeschylus' *Prometheus vinctus*[46] in the 440s[47]: Dodona is one of the oracles consulted by Io's father's, the first port of call on her wandering and the place where her future as wife of Zeus was predicted[48]. Likewise, in Sophocles' *Trachiniae*, dating between c. 450 and the mid 420s BC[49], the shrine of Zeus Dodonaeus and Dione has a distinctive and decisive function[50]. Moreover, the references to the oak[51] and the mention of two Peleiades[52], the Selloi[53] and a sacred wood – ἄλσος[54] – all demonstrate Sopho-

[44] Aesch., *Suppl.* 256-259: ὁρίζομαι δὲ τήν τε Περραιβῶν χθόνα / Πίνδου τε τἀπέκεινα Παιόνων πέλας / ὄρη τε Δωδωναῖα – «There lies within the limits of my rule the land of the Perrhaebi, the parts beyond Pindus close to the Paeonians, and the mountain ridge of Dodona; the edge of the watery sea borders my kingdom. I rule up to these boundaries» (transl. H.W. Smyth).

[45] Mitchell 2001, pp. 341-350.

[46] Aesch., *Prometh.* 659-661 and 829-835.

[47] Griffith 1977; Taplin 1977; West 1979, pp. 130-148; Pattoni 1987; Hernández Munoz 2003, pp. 149-157; Kyriakou 2011, p. 12.

[48] Aesch., *Prometh.* 659-661: ὁ δ' ἔς τε Πυθὼ κἀπὶ Δωδώνην πυκνοὺς / θεοπρόπους ἴαλλεν, ὡς μάθοι τί χρὴ / δρῶντ' ἢ λέγοντα δαίμοσιν πράσσειν φίλα. / ἦκον δ' ἀναγγέλλοντες αἰολοστόμους / χρησμούς, ἀσήμους δυσκρίτως τ' εἰρημένους – «And he sent many messengers to Pytho and Dodona so that he might discover what deed or word of his would find favour with the gods. But they returned with report of oracles, riddling, obscure, and darkly worded» (transl. H. Weir Smyth).

[49] The dating of the *Trachiniae* is a very controversial topic. The great majority of the scholars date it to c. 429 BC (Pohlenz 1954; Kirkwood 1958; Pohslander 1963; Raven 1965, Parke 1967, pp. 61-62); Mitchell-Boyask 2008, pp. 69-75 is more inclined to the 420s BC and Jebb 1892, p. XVI to 420-410 BC. Of different opinion Stinton 1977 and Hoey 1979, the first placing the the drama among the earliest works of Sophocles and the second to c. 450 BC.

[50] Sophocles mentions Dodona several times also in another play, the *Odysseus Acanthoplex*, which is difficult to date because only a few fragments have survived: Soph., *Od. Akanth.*, fr. 455 (Radt): Δωδῶνι ναίων Ζεὺς ὁ Νάιος βροτῶν – «Zeus living at Dodona, whom mortals call Naios»; 456 (Radt): τὰς θεσπιῳδοὺς ἱερέας Δωδωνίδας – «the prophetic priestesses of Dodona»; 460 (Radt): νῦν δ' οὔτε μ' ἐκ Δωδῶνος οὔτε Πυθικῶν / γυ[άλων] τις ἂν πείσειεν – «But as things are no one from Dodona or the hollows of Pytho could persuade me» (transl. H. Lloyd, Jones); 461 (Radt): καὶ τὸν ἐν Δωδῶνι παῦσον δαίμον' εὐλογούμενον – «and put a stop to the praises of the god at Dodona!» (transl. H. Lloyd, Jones).

[51] Soph., *Trach.* 171 and 1168. In other passages (Soph., *Trach.* 76-87 and 821-825) Deianira mentions μαντεῖα πιστὰ and oracular prophecies, probably referring to Dodona.

[52] Soph., *Trach.* 172.

[53] Soph., *Trach.* 1166-1167.

[54] Soph., *Trach.* 1167.

cles' deep knowledge of the shrine, as well as the intertextual relations with Homer and Pindar[55].

Thus, from being a mere geographical backdrop to the drama, after c. 450s BC the shrine acquired a more prominent and self-contained role in many Attic plays. This *crescendo* might reflect the increasing popularity among the Athenians of a rather exotic and distant shrine, probably little known till then[56].

Contacts between Athens and Dodona are documented at the time of the Peloponnesian war[57]. A 5th century BC fragmentary dedicatory inscription, found within the *temenos* at Dodona, refers to an Athenian naval victory over the members of the Peloponnesian League[58]: Ἀθε̄ναῖοι : ἀπὸ Πελοπον[ν]ε̄σίω̄ν · ναυμαχίαι : νικέ̄σαντες : ἀ[νέθεσαν - - - -].

It is plausible that the inscription relating to an *anathema*, now lost, is linked to the Athenian naval victory at Rhion, won by Phormio's fleet in 429 BC, along the north-western Greek coast[59]. Thucydides informs that the Athenians and their allies

[55] Apart from the story of the two doves/Peleiades at the origin of the oracle as in Pindar (fr. 59) and Herodotus (II, 55), Sophocles echoed the Homeric verses of Achilles' prayer with the periphrasis τῶν ὀρείων καὶ χαμαικοιτῶν (1166), indicating the Selloi, cf. Hom., *Il*. XVI, 233-236: Ζεῦ ἄνα Δωδωναῖε Πελασγικὲ τηλόθι ναίων / Δωδώνης μεδέων δυσχειμέρου, ἀμφὶ δὲ Σελλοὶ / σοὶ ναίουσ' ὑποφῆται ἀνιπτόποδες χαμαιεῦναι – «Zeus, thou king, Dodonaean, Pelasgian, thou that dwellest afar, ruling over wintry Dodona, and about thee dwell the Selloi, thine interpreters, men with unwashen feet that couch on the ground» (transl. A.T. Murray).

[56] A confirmation of the full-blown popularity of the shrine among the Athenians is the major involvement of Dodona in Euripides' dramas (*Andromacha*, *Phoenissae*, *Erechtheus*, *Archelaos*). Allen (2000, pp. 149-150 and 159-160) points out that the setting of *Andromacha* in Molossia would make sense to the Attic audience only in a time of established and intense contacts between the *polis* and the region, which must have thus preceded the dramatic date of the play in c. 425 BC. On the other plays mentioning Dodona: Eurip., *Phoen*. 977-985, dating to 411-409 BC; Eurip., *Erechth*., fr. 368 (Moscati Castelnuovo 2017, part. pp. 109-111 and Chapter 6); Eurip., fr. papyracea, II, 19-25; Eurip., *Arch*., fr. 228+1 (Harder 1985, p. 155, pp. 190-206).

[57] The oracle mentioned by Pausanias (VIII, 11, 12) and allegedly misunderstood by the Athenians at the time of the Sicilian expedition comes most probably from a collection of oracles. It does not deserve here any particular attention.

[58] Carapanos 1878, p. 47 no. 20, pl. XXVI, 2; *Syll*.[3] 73; Parke 1967, p. 136; Lazzarini 1976, p. 321 no. 988; Dieterle 2007, p. 380 F 598-599; Hornblower 1991, p. 370; Fantasia 2003, pp. 552-553.

[59] Thuc. II, 83-84, 3. In 429 BC, the Athenians obtained two naval victories between Patras and Naupactos and both times dedications were made (Thuc. II, 84, 4-5; II, 92, 4).

erected a *tropaion* and dedicated a ship in the sanctuary of Poseidon at Rhion.

The fact that Thucydides does not mention a dedication at Dodona is not a conclusive argument for denying that the Athenians made a dedication there after the victory of Rhion: as far as we know, on that occasion, the Athenians made offerings in sanctuaries other than the Poseideion recorded by Thucydides. According to Pausanias, in the portico of the Athenians at Delphi, «built out of the spoils they took in their war against the Peloponnesians and their allies», there was a dedication commemorating these sea-battles and referring to a sacrifice offered to Theseus and Poseidon at Cape Rhion. Moreover, Pausanias adds that «the inscription refers to Phormio, son of Asopichos, and to his achievements»[60].

As a matter of fact, Phormio not only most probably made an offering at Dodona, but also consulted the oracle, as a lead tablet recently published records[61]. The lamella bears only the name, without reference to the question asked. The editors date it to the end of the 5th to the beginning of the 4th century on historical grounds[62]. The peculiarity of the name, well attested but not very common[63], as well as the activity of the Athenian *strategos* in north-western Greece in the second half of the 5th century BC, strengthen the reliability of this identification, confirming once again the richness and historical importance of the information provided by the oracular tablets from Dodona.

60 Paus. X, 11, 6; Hornblower 1991, p. 370; Fantasia 2003, pp. 552-553.
61 DVC 460.
62 DVC, pp. 144-145.
63 *LGPN I* (7); *II* (33); *III.A* (11); *III.B* (12); *IV* (21); *V.A* (9); *V.B* (18).

Appendix – Dodona and the Cult of Bendis in Attic Inscriptions

1. *IG I³ 136*

Decree 1
fragments a and c

[Π]ασιφῶν Φρεάρ[ριος ἐγραμμάτευε]·
ἔδοχσεν τεῖ βολεῖ καὶ [τοῖ δέμοι· ..c.8…ἐπρυτάνευε, Πασιφῶν ἐγρα]
μμάτευε, […]
]κλεῖς ἐπεστάτε, Κλε[όκριτος εἶρχε, ..c.8… εἶπε·…..c.15……]σασθαι διαπομ-
παιον ἀπὸ τεῖς πόλε[ος ……c.35…… σ]τρατος. μετὰ δὲ
ταῦτα, εὔχσασ[θαι ……c.37……] τεῖς φυλεῖς ἑκάστε-
ς [θ]ύσεν, ἐὰν [……c.40……]τ̣αι τῶν πολεμίον κα-
[…]ᾳυ̣[.]ρ̣[……c.40…… κα]ὶ τἄλλα ἃ παραινεῖ
[……c.43…… τεῖ Βενδ]ῖδι καὶ τὸ ἄγαλμα ε-
[……c.52……]ον καὶ τὲν στέλε-
[ν ……c.51…… ἐπι]μελεθέσονται
[……c.53……]ϙθαι τὸν δε̃μον
[……c.53……] πρὸς δὲ τοῦτο τ̣-
[……c.52……]ι̣ τεῖ Βενδῖδι [..]
[……c.53……] αἰεὶ ἑκατερ[..]
[……c.55……] Θραιττα[…]
[……c.55……]σθαι δ[.4-5.]
[……c.54……]δ̣εοι [.6-7..]

lacuna ?

fragment b

[……c.31……]ερᾳ[……c.31……]
[……c.29……]ι ἐννέα [……c.29……]
[……c.28……]ος καὶ ἐπα[ρχε ……c.26……]
[……c.26…… τ]ὲγ γενομέ[νεν ……c.27……]
[……c.24…… τε̃]ς ἐπαρχεῖς ἐς̣ [……c.29……]
[……c.26……]αν ὅσο δ’ ἂν πρ[αθεῖ ……c.25……]
[……c.21…… καὶ οἱ πάρ]εδροι· τὸς δὲ α[…… .c.29……]
[……c.21…… ὸς κ]άλλιστα. θύεν δὲ ε[……c.29……]
[……c.16…… ἑ βο]λὲ καὶ ἄλλος ὅστις ἄ̣ν [……c.29……]

[……c.16……τ]ὲν παννυχίδα ποεῖν ὁς[κάλλιστα……c.23……]
[……c.16……]ς μενὸς τεῖ ἐνδεκάτει [……c.31……]
[….c.13…..] εἴτε χρὲ γυναῖκα *h*ιερεος [……c.30……]
[..c.8… Ἀθενα]ίον ἁπάντον πεμφσάντοι̣ [……c.32……]
[….c.13…..] ὁς τάχιστα· ὅτι δ’ ἂν ἀνέλε[ι ……c.31……]
[…c.11….]λαμβάνεντῶνδεμοσίαιθυο[μένον……c.27……]
[..c.7.. ἀπ]ὸ δέκα *h*ιερείον· τὰ δὲ ἄλλα δέρματ̣[α ……c.28……]
[.c.5. τὸ λο]ιπὸν κλερῶν περὶ τούτον τὸς *h*ιερο[ποιός ……c.23……]
[…c.9…ἑ]κάστοτε τεῖ Βενδῖδι ἀπὸ πεντέκο[ντα……c.25……]
[..c.8… πρ]υτανείας· οἱ δὲ κολακρέται διδόν[τον τὸ ἀργύριον …..c.15……]
[…c.10…]α τὲν βολὲν αὐτοκράτορα ἔ̃ναι̣ [……c.22…… τὸ δὲ φσέφι]-
[σμα τόδε ἀνα]γράφσας ὁ γραμματεὺς ὁ τ[ἔ̃ς βολἔ̃ς ἐν στέλει λιθίνει καταθέτο ἐν τοῖ]
[Βενδιδέοι· ο]ἱ δὲ πολεταὶ ἀπομισθ̣οσ[άντον· οἱ δὲ κολακρέται δόντον τὸ ἀργύριον].

Decree 2

[..c.8… εἶπ]ε̣· τ̣ὰ̣ [μὲν ἄλλα καθάπερ ……c.37……]

———————————————————————

Fragments a+c

«Pasiphon of Phrearrhioi [was secretary].
The Council and the People decided; [– was in prytany; Pasiphon] was secretary;
[---]kles was chairman; Kle[okritos was archon (?); … proposed]:
… a rite
of expulsion (?) from the city … [---]stratos. After this
make a vow … from each tribe
will sacrifice, if … the enemy
… and the other things which …advises
… for Bendis and the statue
… and the stele
… they will take care
… the People
…and for this purpose
… for Bendis …
… always each of the two …

15 … Thracian woman …
…
…

Fragment b
…
… nine …
20 … and a cult tax …
… which occurred…
… the cult tax for …
… for whatever it is sold …
… and his assistants; and the …
25 … as handsomely as possible; and to sacrifice …
… the Council and anyone else who …
… perform the all-night rite[64] as [handsomely] as possible …
… on the eleventh of the month …
… whether the wife of the priest ought …
30 … (from) all the Athenians, let them send …
… as soon as possible; and whatever (the god) responds …
… shall receive of the sacrifices made publicly …
… from ten sacrificial victims; and the other skins …
… in future the religious officials shall carry out an allotment about these matters …
35 … on each occasion for Bendis at a cost of fifty [drachmas] …
… prytany; and let the payment officers give [the money] …
… the Council shall be authorised …
Let the secretary of the Council [write up this decree on a stone stele and set it down in the Bendideion?]; and let the official sellers put the work out to contract; [and let the payment officers provide the money].

Decree 2
40 … proposed: in [other respects in accordance with …]».
(transl. S. Lambert, R. Parker in <www.atticinscriptions.com/IGI3/136>)

[64] A *pannychis*, for that of Bendis also Plato, *Resp*. I, 328a; Parke 1977, pp. 149-152; Parker 2005, p. 166 and p. 182.

2. *IG II*² *1283*

θεοί.
ἐπὶ Πολυστράτου ἄρχοντος μηνὸς Ἑκατομβαιῶνος ὀγδόη-
ι ἱσταμένου· ἀγορᾶι κυρίαι· Σωσίας Ἱπποκράτου εἶπεν· νν
ἐπειδὴ τοῦ δήμου τοῦ Ἀθηναίων δεδωκότος τοῖς Θραιξὶ μ-
όνοις τῶν ἄλλων ἐθνῶν τὴν ἔγκτησιν καὶ τὴν ἵδρυσιν τοῦ
ἱεροῦ κατὰ τὴν μ[α]ντείαν τὴν ἐγ Δωδώνης καὶ τὴν πονπὴν π-
ένπειν ἀπὸ τῆς ἑστίας τῆς ἐκκ τοῦ πρυτανείου καὶ νῦν οἱ
ἠι[ρη]μένοι ἐν τῶι ἄστει κατασκευάσασθαι ἱερὸν οἵοντα-
ι δεῖν οἰκείως διακεῖ[σθ]αι πρὸς ἀλλήλους· ὅπως ἂν οὖν φα-
[ίν]ωνται καὶ οἱ ὀργεῶνες τῶι τε τῆς πόλεως νόμωι πειθαρ-
χοῦντες ὃς κελεύει τοὺς Θρᾶικας πέμπειν τὴμ πομπὴν εἰ-
[ς Π]ε[ι]ραιᾶ καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἐν τῶι ἄστει ὀργεῶνας οἰκείως [δ]-
ιακείμενοι· ν ἀγαθεῖ τύχει δεδόχθαι τοῖς ὀργεῶσιν ν [τὴ]-
[ν μὲν] πονπὴ[ν ὡ]ς ἂν [ἔ]λωνται οἱ ἐν τῶι ἄστει συνκαθι[στάνα]-
ι τὴμ πομπὴν καὶ τήνδε <ο>ὗν ἐκ τοῦ πρυτανείου εἰς Πει[ραιᾶ]
πορεύεσσθαι ἐν τῶι αὐτῶι τοῖς ἐκ τοῦ Πειραιέως· τ[οὺς δὲ ἐ]-
ν τῶι Πειραιεῖ ἐπιμελητὰς ὑποδέχεσσθαι τούτου[ς παρέ]-
χοντας ἔν τε τῶι Νυμφαίωι σφ<ό>γγους καὶ λεκάνας κ[αὶ ὕδωρ]
καὶ στεφάνους καὶ ἐν τῶι ἱερῶι ἄριστον καθάπερ [καὶ ἐαυ]-
τοῖς παρασκευάζουσιν· ὅταν δὲ ὦσιν αἱ θυσίαι εὖ[χεσθαι]
τὸν ἱερέα καὶ τὴν ἱέρειαν πρὸς ταῖς εὐχαῖς ἃς εὔ[χονται]
καὶ τοῖς ὀργεῶσι τοῖς ἐν τῶι ἄστει κατὰ ταὐτά, ὅ[πως ἂν τού]-
τῶν γινομένων καὶ ὁμονοοῦντος παντὸς τοῦ ἔθ[νους αἵ τ]-
ε θυσίαι γίνωνται τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ὅσα πρ[οσήκει]
κατά τε τὰ πάτρια τῶν Θραικῶν καὶ τοὺς τῆς πόλ[εως νόμου]-
ς καὶ ἔχει καλῶς καὶ εὐσεβῶς παντὶ τῶι ἔθν[ει τὰ πρὸς τοὺ]-
ς θεούς· εἶναι δ' αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐὰν περὶ ἄλλο[υ τινὸς βούλωντ]-
αι προσιέναι πρὸς τοὺς ὀργεῶνας πρ[όσοδον ἀεὶ πρώτοις]
μετὰ τὰ ἱερὰ καὶ ἐάν τινε[ς βούλωνται τῶν ἐν τῶι ἄστει]
ὀργεώνων ἐπεισιέ[ναι εἰς τοὺς ὀργεῶνας ἐξεῖναι αὐτοῖ]-
ς εἰσιέναι κ[αὶ λαμβάνειν καὶ μὴ τελοῦντας τὴν φορὰν διὰ]
βίου τὸ μέρ[ος —]

«Gods! In the year that Polystratos was civic leader (*archōn*), on the 8th of the month of Hekatombion, at the regular assembly, Sosias son of Hippokrates made the motion: Whereas, the People of Athens granted to the Thracians, alone of all of the immigrant groups (*ethnē*), the right to own property (*enktēsis*) and to build a

sanctuary in accordance with the oracle of Dodona and to have a procession from the hearth of the building of the civic presidency (*prytaneion*). Now those who have been chosen to build a sanctuary in the *Asty* think that both groups should be favorably disposed to each other, so that the sacrificing associates (*orgeōnes*) may also be seen to be obedient to the law of the city, which orders the Thracians to have their procession continue to the Piraeus, and being favorably disposed towards the sacrificing associates who are in the *Asty*. For good fortune, the sacrificing associates resolve that, when those in the *Asty* choose to arrange the procession, the procession shall therefore proceed from the building of the civic presidency to the Piraeus in the same procession with those members from the Piraeus. Further, they resolve that the supervisors in the Piraeus shall promise to supply sponges in the sanctuary (or: during the festival) of the Nymphs and to supply cups, water, wreaths, and a meal in the sanctuary, just as they prepare for themselves.

When the sacrifices occur, the priest and the priestess shall pray – in addition to the prayers that they normally pray and in the same way – for the sacrificing associates who are in the *Asty*, so that when these things take place and the entire immigrant group (*ethnos*) lives in concord, the sacrifices and other rites shall be made to the gods, in accordance with both the ancestral customs of the Thracians and the laws of the city. So that it will turn out well and in a manner reflecting piety for the entire immigrant group (*ethnos*) in matters concerning the gods.

Furthermore, if one of the sacrificing associates (of the *Asty*) should wish to have access to the sacrificing associates (of the Piraeus) concerning some other matter, they shall always have priority following the sacred rites. Also, if one of the sacrificing associates of the *Asty* should wish to join the sacrificing associates, they may do so, and receive portions of the sacrifice without paying the fee, for life, the portion …» (transl. J.S. Kloppenborg).

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